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# THE HOMILIST.

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DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

OF LONDON,

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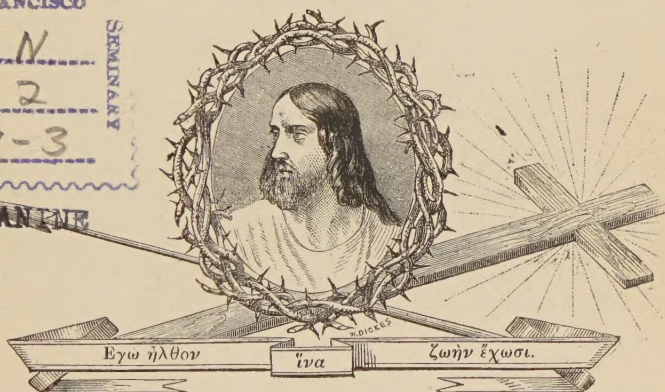
URIJAH REES THOMAS,

OF BRISTOL.

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"THE LETTER KILLETH, BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—Paul.

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## *Leading Homily.*

### THE GROWTH OF THE TRUE.

“AND HE SAID, SO IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AS IF A MAN SHOULD CAST SEED INTO THE GROUND: AND SHOULD SLEEP AND RISE NIGHT AND DAY, AND THE SEED SHOULD SPRING AND GROW UP HE KNOWETH NOT HOW. .FOR THE EARTH BRINGETH FORTH OF HERSELF: FIRST THE BLADE, THEN THE EAR, AFTER THAT THE FULL CORN IN THE EAR. BUT WHEN THE FRUIT IS BROUGHT FORTH—IMMEDIATELY HE PUTTETH IN THE SICKLE, BECAUSE THE HARVEST IS COME.” *Mark iv. 26-29.*

**E**ACH of the parables spoken by our Lord, to illustrate and explain the kingdom of God takes up a different aspect of that Divine Life. We cannot spare one of the parables. The Divine Life is so manifold in its nature and its manifestations that it needs many parables and “comparisons” to set it forth. You can only get a complete idea of anything as you look at it in many ways. How complex and wondrous is the life and growth of the body. How will you understand that? You must study it from many points of view. You



must employ many figures and forms of expression to unfold and explain it. And even more complex and wondrous still, is the life of God in the spirit of a man : and it needs many parables to illustrate and bring forth its manifold aspects. There is the parable of the leaven. What does that teach ? It teaches the silent diffusiveness of Spiritual Life. It spreads until the whole man is sanctified. There is the parable of the mustard seed. What does that teach ? It teaches the power of growth and expansion in the Divine Life. It expands and enlarges itself until it becomes a great and glorious thing. And the parable with which I am now dealing has definite teachings of its own : teachings which you find in no other parable. It teaches the inherent energy and vitality of the kingdom of God. But at the outset there is one thing that must be borne in mind. It is a very important consideration. It is implied that a man be sincere, devout, earnest. He must keep himself in living oneness with God, and in a true condition for the growth of the inner life. Suppose a field is stony ; full of rank weeds ; marshy ; the farmer may sow his seed there, but it will not grow ; it will rot or be choked and overgrown. And if a man is like that field—full of stones and moral weeds : careless, undevout, worldly, there will be no growth of the seed of the kingdom in him. In that man it will not quietly and ceaselessly develope itself. It will wither and fade. A man must be like good ground. Let this be emphasised, because of what I am going to say. I would not encourage carelessness and false confidence. The kind of man to whom this parable relates, is the spiritual, prayerful, true-hearted man : no other. It is important to carry this consideration

along with us, and bear it in mind throughout our meditation. We come now to the teachings of this parable in relation to the kingdom of God.

I. The kingdom of God in the soul, in its VITALITY AND GROWTH IS MYSTERIOUS. "As if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed springs and grows up, HE KNOWETH NOT HOW." No one can tell how it is that seed cast into the soil, germinates and springs up, and unfolds itself into strength, and beauty, and fruitfulness. You can tell that light, and air, and warmth, and moisture are necessary to the life and productiveness of vegetation; but how is that? How do the seeds thrive on these outward elements? You do not know. It is a mystery. That is as true now as when Christ spoke the parable, so long ago. There is a hidden, self-unfolding power in the seed, but it is too subtle for us to discover. It eludes our closest scrutiny. The secret of the process is with the Creator. It is so with the Divine Life in man's soul. Its growth is mysterious; secret.

Often we may tell how and when the good seed was sown in our hearts. It may be that sickness, bereavement, bankruptcy came, and the man was left humbled, crushed, saddened. He saw what he had never realised before—the transitoriness of earthly good; and in the wake of that stern forerunner—trial—the sower has come, sowing the seeds of truth and righteousness. It may be that the subtle working of personal influence—the sacred influence of father, mother, friend, brother, child—broke up the hard-trodden fallow ground, and scattered the seeds of Divine life. It may be that the penalty of past sin—a penalty hard, stern, keen as a

two-edged sword, piercing to the very centre of the soul—startled and awakened the soul into a new conviction of sin; and into the ground thus prepared the “word of the kingdom” has fallen. We may tell the time and circumstances of the sower going forth to sow, and even the hand that, under the guidance of God, planted the seed in our hearts. But the method of the after development, you do not know. The way in which faith, purity, self-sacrifice, love, grow within us, is all very subtle and mysterious. The way in which the Divine Spirit broods over us—fills our being—burns up the thorns and thistles with His unquenchable fire—nourishes and fosters that which is good—ripens and perfects us in all holiness—that is something too profound for our little philosophy. The secret is with God. It is His work, and He carries it on. There should be comfort in this. You cannot explain the process of spiritual growth! No! And it does not depend upon your analysing it. It is a Divine secret. Then trust in God. He knows all about it. He understands the strange and wondrous process. He has ordained that the kingdom of heaven should develope itself; and if in the soul there be sincerity, moral earnestness, it will do so. Trust, therefore, in God.

II. The kingdom of God in the soul, in its vitality and growth, is CEASELESS. “As if a man should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed springs and grows up.” When the mason leaves his work and goes home, as he left the work overnight, so he finds it in the morning. The building has made no progress while the builder has been at rest. There are no new features in the stone face he has been carving. Things are as they were when he threw his tools aside and



strode home to his cottage and his evening meal. But the little plants in his garden keep on growing both when his hand is busy watering and weeding them, and when they are left alone. Go into the country on a Sabbath day. There are no toilers in yonder fields. There are no voices of peasants and labourers to break the peaceful stillness of nature. The tillers of the ground are at rest: and husbandry pauses awhile. But in those fields there is no rest or pause. Life and growth are going on rapidly there, night and day: one day and night as another. Unhasting, yet unresting, vegetation goes on expanding toward fulness and completeness. It is so with the Divine life in him who is of an honest and good heart. There is ceaseless development. There are times when we can readily understand that the good man must be growing in goodness:—when he prays, when he reads his Bible, when he worships in the house of God, when he bends in devout meditation. In these seasons we can readily perceive that there will be progress in the soul's life. Yes! but that is not all. These are not the only times in which the good man is growing in grace. When he is in his daily toil, earning the bread which perisheth, he is growing. When he goes away for rest and change to the hill sides, and the sounding sea-shore, he is growing. Even when he is not thinking of religion he is growing. Day and night, in toil and in rest, in Christian ordinances and out of Christian ordinances, the spiritual man is steadily progressing in his inner Life. The good seed springs up and unfolds itself, because of the vital power which God imparts to it, and because of the gracious influences which He sheds from above. Only mark the condition: a man must

keep himself in true oneness with God. That is the kind of man in whom all this takes place : no other. "Except a man abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered." But having that living union with Christ, let the heart be at rest. Do not doubt, but believe in God. Do not be like simple, impatient children that go many times a day to dig up the seeds to see whether they grow. There is such a thing as a wise repose and confidence in God. Rest in the assurance that he that goeth forth bearing precious seed, shall return again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

III. The kingdom of God in the soul HAS ITS STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT. "The blade : the ear : the full corn in the ear." There is the "blade"—fresh, vigorous, swaying in the wind, a thing that is full of promise, having a beauty of its own, and yet immature, incomplete. It is dwarfed in stature, lifting itself only a few inches above the ground. It is tender, a little thing will hurt and blight it. It has only a negative life ; there is no food in it to feed the hungry. Not that it is to be despised. It is precious, a cheerful sight to the eye of the farmer, and without it there could be no harvest. Still it is only the beginning of harvest. After the "blade" is the "ear"—the early promise of harvest is nearing its fulfilment. There is more strength, and beauty, and vigour. The plant is taller and fuller of life. It has more symmetry and definiteness. It sways with a richer life in the breeze, and wears a brighter aspect in the landscape ! The farmer looks abroad with a surer hope and a deeper joy. After the "blade" and the "ear" is the "full corn in the ear." At last there is ripeness, maturity. The

fields are white unto harvest, and the labourers go forth to reap the golden grain. A few seeds have been multiplied into bread for a nation, and rejoicing fills the land. Now there are stages in the Divine Life which correspond to these stages in the growth of the seed. There is the time when spiritual life is only a very incomplete thing. It is precious, sacred, blessed—let no one speak lightly of it. Still it is only a small, imperfect life. The character lacks fulness and definiteness. There is not the strength and endurance that can face the storms and conflicts of life, and overcome them. There is more feeling than solid conviction. The higher and truer realisation of Christ has not yet dawned upon the soul. Faith, self-sacrifice, righteousness are only in their elementary and initial stages. That is one stage: “First the BLADE.” Then there is the period when the Life of God, expands into fuller vigour and grace. It takes on new forms. The blade blossoms into the ear, which is a new and higher form of life. Spring advances until it is changed into the larger glory of summer. And in the soul, there is not only growth, but a sacred unfolding into new and Diviner forms of goodness. Many of the old weaknesses are shed, and others are fast falling away. The sensitiveness to duty is quick and true. There is peace and joy in obedience, for much of the former conflict between the higher and lower natures is past. The feet and hands of obedience move with greater freedom, and facility, and aptitude. There is a deeper and profounder trust in God amidst the losses and cares of life; for the Father is beheld with a clearer eye, and realised with greater assurance. The moral influence—direct and indirect—is more powerful in the home, and the

church, and the world. Truth, and goodness, and God, are loved and sought with a more earnest aim, for their eternal blessedness has shined forth and enchanted the soul. The former reverence and love to Christ has grown into a new reverence and love: and that great word has been heard, "Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends." This is another stage: "First the blade, then the EAR." Finally, there is the period of ripeness, maturity, when the life of the soul is full-orbed and harmonious. There is the golden glory of goodness, and the life of heaven is already begun on earth. It is the waiting-time—all that now remains to be done is that the angels come and gather the wheat into the garner. The life has reached its fulness here: not its eternal fulness, for in another world fresh possibilities will be disclosed. "We shall see him as he is, and be like him."

The day of harvest for each one is drawing near. Be earnest, be true, be real. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ." "Be not weary in well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." Time spreads abroad its wings, and though it flies silently as the orbs of heaven, yet its flight is swift and sure. Another year lies behind us; one year less before us. In the new year that opens to us, the heavenly sun will shine, and the heavenly showers will fall, and the heavenly breezes will blow, to nourish and strengthen the good seed in our hearts. Let there be growth and progress, therefore, in the new year. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life."



# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase, or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLIII.

### God's Management of Man upon the Earth.

“HE TURNETH RIVERS INTO A WILDERNESS,” &c. (Psalm cvii. 33-43.)

**HISTORY:** See Vol. xlvii., p. 379

**NOTE:** This Psalm here changes its character. In the preceding portion, which we have already noticed, there are a variety of pictures of individual trial and affliction, and repetitions of a common refrain. But in this section we have God's dealings with families and nations.

**ANNOTATIONS:** Ver. 33.—“*He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground.*” He turns streams into a wilderness, and springs of water to a thirsty place. “As the shifting of the scene is not renewed in the remainder of the psalm, which, on the other hand, if viewed as a distinct and independent

portion of the poem, mars its symmetry of structure, it seems best to regard these verses as an episode belonging to the last scene, and containing the praises of the people and their elders. The figures in this verse are often used, particularly by Isaiah, to denote an entire revolution, whether physical or moral, social or political (Compare Isa. xliv. 2, 6, 7; 1. 2; Jer. i. 38; li. 36). It thus prepares the way for the subsequent rejoicings in the downfall of Babylon, and the restoration of the exiled Jews."—*Alexander*.

Ver. 34.—"*A fruitful land into barrenness.*" Literally saltiness, like the land round Sodom and Gomorrah. "*For the wickedness of them that dwell therein.*" In many ways the wickedness of a population affects the conditions of the soil on which they live.

Ver. 35.—"*He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water springs.*" Here is a change in the character of the land, and a change effected by the Creator. The wilderness becomes a water-pool, a marsh, saturated with moisture, and the dry ground He moistens with refreshing waters.

Ver. 36.—"*And there He maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation.*" The hungry in a bodily sense; a "city" a permanent dwelling place.

Ver. 37.—"*And sow the fields and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase.*" The exiles in Babylon, to whom the command was given, "build ye houses and dwell in them, plant gardens and eat the fruit of them" (Jer. xxix. 5), may have experienced the truth of this. He gives to the hungry food, and to the homeless a home.

Ver. 38.—"*He pleaseth them also, so that they are multiplied greatly, and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.*" Their numbers are multiplied, and this was considered a great blessing in their time and land. Their flocks did not decrease; they became prosperous in numbers, strength, and possessions.

Ver. 39.—"*Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.*" "Though the earth yield her fruit, the malign influence of the oppressor makes itself felt for a season by the evil and sorrow which power, allied with pride and cruelty, is able to inflict. It is an

obvious fact that oppression is permitted for a time in the providence of God.”—Murphy.

Ver. 40, 41.—“*He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way; yet setteth He the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.*” These verses seem to be taken from Job (Job xii. 21, 24; xxi. 11). See *Problemata Mundi*, in loco.

Ver. 42.—“*The righteous shall see it and rejoice, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth.*” This verse is also taken from Job, the first part from Job

xxii. 19, and the latter part from Job v. 16.

Ver. 43.—“*Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.*” Having related some of the judgments and mercies of God, the psalmist declares that the truly wise man will so reflect on the subject as to see the loving kindness of God in all.

ARGUMENT :—(1) God works in the history of His people, which is full of revolutions (ver. 33, 41). (2) This history insures and will repay the study of the wisest men (ver. 42-43).

HOMILETICS :—The paragraph may be taken to illustrate *God’s management of mankind upon the earth*, and it suggests two remarks concerning this management.

I. IT INVOLVES GREAT REVOLUTIONS. The changes referred to here are in two departments of human life. First: In the *secular* department. “*He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water springs into dry ground,*” &c. (ver. 33-38). The Governor of the world is here represented as making fruitful lands barren, and barren lands fruitful. This fact was illustrated in the case of Sodom, whose fertile soil was smitten with barrenness. Also in the case of the land of Canaan; at one time this was one of the most fruitful spots under heaven, and now we are told it is one of the most worthless

and fruitless places on the earth. Examples of making barren places fruitful abound. You have them in our own island, our Australian Colonies, and the Transatlantic domains of America. How does God do this generally? Not *miraculously*. By His mere volition He could of course smite with barrenness all the most fruitful places on the earth, and touch it into fruitfulness all the most unfertile and barren. But this He does not do. (1) He does it by man. To man He has given the power to change the character of the soil. Man has the power to make orchards out of wildernesses, and gardens out of deserts, and thus cause the "wilderness to blossom as the rose." This He is constantly doing. One of man's primary missions into the world, indeed, was to till the earth. (2) He does it by man, with a due regard to man's character. By the moral, the wise, the industrious man, He makes the barren places fruitful; and by the corrupt, the indolent, the foolish man, He turns a fruitful land into barrenness. The physical condition of a land is thus changed by the moral character of its inhabitants. Some lands are cursed for man's sake, whilst other lands are blessed for man's sake. Should the time ever come, which inspiration has taught us to anticipate, when all the inhabitants of the world shall be restored to true wisdom and holiness, the round earth will physically transcend in beauty and fruitfulness the glorious Eden of the young world. What is the moral of this? That if you would so improve the fruitfulness of your country, as to make it yield abundant supplies for man and beast, improve the moral character of its population. The changes referred to here are Secondly: In the *social* department. (1) They are seen in *families*. They are seen in *rais-*



ing poor families to riches. "*He setteth the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.*" Their land becomes fruitful, their cattle increase, their homes "*a city for habitation.*" Such elevations of poor families abound everywhere, in all countries, and communities. From the great bulk of any population you see families thickly rising from the depths of poverty to competency and wealth. The changes are seen in *sinking rich families into poverty.* "*Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow.*" Though, perhaps, the families that descend from riches to poverty are not so numerous as those that ascend from poverty to wealth, they are by no means few in every community, and in every period. Thousands in England to-day are moving on the inclined plane. Those who have been sailing through life, and their ancestors before them, in ships of magnificence, are now struggling amidst hostile elements, and are destined to go down to the depths of indigence and obscurity. There are those everywhere who are stepping out of the mansions in which they have been born, and wending their way into alleys and hovels. God's providence has been compared to a wheel; as the wheel goes round those who are up to-day, will be down to-morrow, and the reverse. (2.) They are seen in *nations.* "*He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.*" He hurls emperors and princes from their thrones, wrecks their governments and confounds their policy. "*He pours contempt upon them, even among those that have idolised them.*" Those that exalt themselves will God abase, and in order thereunto will infatuate. He makes them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way. He baffles those

counsels by which they thought to support themselves, and their own power and pomp, and drives them headlong, so that they know not what course to steer, nor what measures to take." These revolutions in nations fill all history, and are everywhere in process. Despots are falling, thrones are tottering, nations are in tumult.

"This is Thy work, Almighty Providence,  
Whose power beyond the stretch of human thought  
Revolves the orbs of empire; bids them sink  
Deep in the deadening night of Thy displeasure,  
Or rise majestic o'er a wondering world."—*Thomson*.

Another remark which God's management of men on the earth suggests, is,

II. IT REPAYS THE STUDY OF THE WISEST MEN. There is no subject for human study of such transcendent interest and importance as that of God's management of mankind. The study of this subject will serve three purposes. First: To rejoice the good. "*The righteous shall see it and rejoice.*" The righteous will see in the subject how wisely, how beneficently, how universally all things are managed, how "all things work together for good to them that love God," how even evil is overruled to answer benevolent ends. The study will serve Secondly: To confound the wicked. "*All iniquity shall stop her mouth.*" "It shall be," says an old author, "a full conviction of the folly of atheists, of those that deny the Divine providence, and forasmuch as practical atheism is at the bottom of all sin, it shall in effect stop the mouth of all iniquity. When sinners see how this punishment answers to their sin, and how justly God deals with them in taking away from them those gifts of His which they had abused, they shall not have one word to say for themselves. God will be justified, He will be clear."

The study will serve Thirdly : To reveal God's infinite loving kindness to all. "*They shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.*" He who looks sufficiently deeply into God's government of the world will see His goodness everywhere, inspiring, permeating, directing all. What then is to be said of the amount of human suffering that has ever existed, and which still exists? If the Divine management is so good, how comes it there is so much suffering and trial? Three facts should always be considered in connection with this subject : (1) That human suffering, however great, is never equal in amount to that of human enjoyment. This is obvious from the circumstance that men, even in the greatest affliction and trial, earnestly desire the perpetuation of their life and struggle for it. (2) That human suffering is generally, if not always, ascribable to human conduct. Men bring their sufferings on themselves. Either their ancestors or themselves have broken those organic, moral, and social laws, the observance of which is the condition of happiness. (3) That human suffering may, and should, contribute to lasting enjoyment. Sufferings are disciplinary, they are only storms to purify the moral atmosphere of the world, medicated ingredients in the cup of life which, though bitter, are designed and suited to heal the diseases of the soul, and to make it happy and hale.

CONCLUSION.—Rejoice that the world is under divine management, it is neither left to chance, swayed by necessity, or controlled by a malevolent spirit. It is managed by a wisdom that is unerring and all-seeing, and by a power that is Almighty ; managed by an Infinite Father, Who does not willingly chastise His children, but Who in all endeavours to make them "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

"The heirs of salvation we know from His word,  
Through much tribulation must follow their Lord."

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Horner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### No. CXVIII.

#### The Greatest Trials Leading to the Greatest Blessings.

"NEVERTHELESS I TELL YOU THE TRUTH. IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR YOU THAT I GO AWAY; FOR IF I GO NOT AWAY, THE COMFORTER WILL NOT COME UNTO YOU, BUT IF I DEPART I WILL SEND HIM UNTO YOU."

—John xvi. 7.

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 7.—"*Nevertheless I tell you the truth.*"

In the preceding verse Christ says to His disciples "Sorrow hath filled their hearts."

They were indeed in trouble, in deep, sad distress on account of His apprehended departure from thence, and here He means to say "It must be so, I tell you the truth, I who know all your badness, and all your needs, and all that is best for you, I tell you the truth."

"*It is expedient for you that I go away.*" My departure need not distress you. It is in truth necessary for you, "*it is expedient.*" "*For if I go not away the Comforter (the Advocate) will not come unto you.*" "We may not indeed," says an able modern expositor, "fathom the deep counsels of God in

which the reason of these words is to be found; but the order fixed in these counsels was that the Son of Man should complete His work on earth, and offer the sacrifice of Himself for sin, and rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father's throne, before the Advocate should come. The Son of Man was to be glorified before the Spirit was to be given. Humanity was to ascend to heaven before the Spirit could be sent to humanity on earth. The revelation of saving truth was to be completed before inspiration was to breathe as the breath of life into man's soul. The conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment could only follow the finished work of Christ."



HOMILETICS :—The following general truths are suggested by these remarkable words :—

I. THAT THE GREATEST TRIAL MIGHT PROVE THE GREATEST BLESSING. First. *The departure of Christ from His disciples was felt by them to be a most grievous trial.* “Sorrow,” He said “hath filled your hearts.” He had been with them for three years, won their affections, changed their whole history, both their inner experience and their outward circumstances. And now He was leaving them. What a bereavement ! The Sun of their souls sinking beneath the horizon, and their world left in darkness and desolation. Secondly, *The advent of His Spirit to His disciples would be the greatest blessing.* He was the “Comforter,” the Spirit of truth. He would enter the inner temple of their nature and reproduce all the impressions that Christ had made, bring all things to their remembrance and abide with them for ever. His advent more than compensated for the departure of Christ. Thus it ever is, ever has, and ever will be with great trials to the good. So it was with Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul, &c. “Our light afflictions.”

II. THAT THE GREATEST TRIAL MAY BE NECESSARY TO THE GREATEST BLESSING. “It is expedient for you that I go away.” The departure of the one was necessary to the advent of the other. What rendered it expedient ? First : It seemed expedient in order to *give a more vivid meaning to the life of Christ.* Never does the life of a loved friend come with such meaning and might into the heart as when death has removed him from the sphere of our observation. Death which takes our friend from our outward eye, enshrines him in the soul, and there he assumes lovelier forms, and yields

a more potent influence. It was so with Christ. When He ceased to be seen without, He became formed within them, the hope of glory. Secondly: *It seemed expedient in order to dissipate all their material and local conceptions of Him.* So long as He was with them corporeally, and judged after the flesh, their religion was sensuous. The impressions of His form, voice, and touch formed the greater part of their religious experience. Even Mary, after His resurrection, wanted to touch Him, embrace Him only after the flesh. His departure tended at once to spiritualise and universalise their conceptions. Thirdly: *It seemed expedient in order to stimulate them to study the eternal principles of duty.* So long as our teacher is with us in person we are contented to have our duty pointed out to us from day to day. Like children we shall be controlled by verbal rules and voices from without. How inferior is the mind moving by prescriptive rules to one that is ruled by universal principles! Fourthly: *It seemed expedient in order to throw the soul upon the help of its own faculties.* Man only really grows and advances as he works his own faculties, and becomes self-reliant. Up to a certain period, parental watching and superintendence are indispensable to the well-being of a child; but if it is extended beyond the proper age it becomes an evil. The law of nature is evidently that the parent, after a certain time, should withdraw, not his *affections*, but his exclusively supporting agency, so that the child may be brought to realise the importance of self-reliance. It is a wise law, yes, a *kind* law, though painful at times, which requires one child after another to withdraw from the parental roof where everything has been supplied, and seek out what-

ever is needed for himself. It is so in relation to the disciples. I do not think that they would have made much advancement, if they had continued to depend upon the personal direction of the Lord, and not upon great principles.

After Christ had withdrawn, the Apostles threw themselves upon principles rather than circumstances, and personal directions. Take Peter as an illustration. What a weak man he was in the hall of Caiaphas. What a strong man on the day of Pentecost, in the Sanhedrim! Acts xxii. 22, 23. Acts v. Thus it is that great trials may be necessary in order to obtain great blessings. It may be necessary to lose friends, health, or property in order to prepare for the duties of life. The words suggest—

III. That the greatest trials and the GREATEST BLESSINGS ARE ALIKE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF CHRIST. First: *The greatest trials are under His direction.* “I go away.” His departure was a tremendous trial to His disciples, but it was at His option. “I go away.” No compulsion, no driving. Christ was free in His death. “I have power to lay down my life,” &c. I go through Gethsemane, over Calvary, down to the grave, up to the clouds on to the eternal throne of the universe, I go, all power is in my hand. Secondly: *The greatest blessings are under His direction.* “I will send him unto you.” Our destiny is in the hands of this Divine Man. The whole of our life is made up of loss and gain, but if we are His, He takes away one thing in order to give us a better.\*

“My Saviour, can it ever be  
That I should gain by losing Thee?”—*Keble.*

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\* See these thoughts more fully amplified in *Homilist*, Vol. X., page 361.

# Sermonic Saplings.

## OUTLINES ON GIDEON.

### V.—The Man at His Best.

“ THEN THE MEN OF ISRAEL SAID UNTO GIDEON, RULE THOU OVER US, BOTH THOU, AND THY SON, AND THY SON’S SON ALSO ; FOR THOU HAST DELIVERED US FROM THE HAND OF MIDIAN, AND GIDEON SAID UNTO THEM, I WILL NOT RULE OVER YOU, NEITHER SHALL MY SON RULE OVER YOU ; THE LORD SHALL RULE OVER YOU.” *Judges viii., 22, and 23.*



MAN is at his best when he overcomes a great temptation, when he shows the might of a regal spirit, and conquers himself. “ He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” Joseph, Abraham, the three Hebrew children, Daniel, and the God-Man. Gideon, now reaches the climax of goodness, which is true greatness.

I. Kingship OFFERED to him. “ Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son also : for thou hast delivered us from the hand of the Midian.” Here is (a) An appeal to the *love of power*. Men love power. What disaster ambition has produced ! The evils of war. The tricks of diplomatists. Prostitution of talents. Sacrifice of principle. Gideon now practically the ruler. To accede to Israel’s request would have added little to his dignity. An outward sign of his greatness. Men like to be thought great, but also to



receive outward expressions of the thought. To be admired is much, to receive outward tokens of that admiration is much more. A great temptation to have kingship offered. Who would not like to be a ruler? To rule in the house, in the society, in the church, in the council chamber, and in the state. "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." Here is (b) An appeal to *paternal affection*. Positions for some, if not all, of Gideon's sons. Even evil fathers know how to give good things unto their children. Gideon most likely a good father, and if he were not disposed to accept the position for himself, yet he would be tempted on account of his sons. The first of a kingly race. The founder of a royal family. Men like to build a house. An opportunity seldom presented. A rare opening. What a temptation! Here is (c) An appeal to *the desire of posthumous fame*. To live after death a widespread, and all but universal desire. One indication of our immortality. The opportunity now presented to Gideon to satisfy desire in a tangible form. To live after death not only as a judge but as a king. His memory perpetuated in the kingship of his sons. His name inscribed in the roll of Israel's kings. Who is the man to refuse? Gideon is that man.

II. Kingship REJECTED by him. "Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you." (a) Gideon's *self-denial*. Some might refuse an offer because they think that the advantages of refusal would be greater than those of acceptance. So far as can be seen the temporal advantage appears to be on the side of Gideon's acceptance of the offered position. Self-denial good in itself. Self-denial for the good of others better. This the nature of Gideon's self-denial.

Thus should Christians deny themselves. "If any man will be my disciple, &c."

(b) *Gideon's patriotism.* Shown as much sometimes by what a man refuses to do as by what he undertakes. Gideon applauded as a patriot when fighting his country's enemies. Admire his patriotism as he refuses to become a king. Not always the truest patriots that wear the soldier's uniform, or that eloquently set forth their love of country. The truest patriot may be the man who refuses to do this or that. The true patriot loves his country better than himself. We need patriots who refuse to accept good positions because it is not the best for the country. (c) *Gideon's loyalty to conscience.* The voice of the people not always the voice of God. But the voice of conscience directed by the Bible, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit is the voice of God. Listen to that voice. We may have to refuse good positions, and thereby incur the hatred of the multitude, but still be loyal. The multitude that say to-day, Rule over us, may to-morrow look with vindictive feelings upon the man who ventures to refuse their request. The multitude, imperious in its nature, and exacting in its demands. Its hosannas worth very little. Let conscience rule. The God of conscience neither imperious, nor exacting, nor fickle. He will finally reward the conscientious.

III. Kingship ACKNOWLEDGED by him. "The Lord shall rule over you." Gideon was no usurper. Would not step into the place of God. Would not rob God of His rights. Gideon might have used a little casuistry. I will be God's vice-gerent, and bring more honour to God by acceptance than by refusal. Gideon no jesuit. He could play no logical tricks. He was not ready for

lawyer-like quacks. (a) *Fidelity to God.* Gideon teaches the men of all times a lesson of fidelity to God. Why usurp God's authority? Moderns will not let God rule. Seem to say—let nature, let science, let revolution, let fashion rule. Require more men to refuse to bow before the ideal kings of modern creation, and to say, The Lord shall rule. Let God rule in affairs of state, in politics, in business, in society, in the house, and in the heart. He is best ruled, the country is best ruled, that is ruled by God. (b) *Reproof of the people.* You have the theocratic form of government. The best form. Why seek to subvert the divine arrangement? Kings a divine order, but ordered in consideration of human weakness. Human governments the outcome of human depravity. If all were brotherly there would be no monarchs required. God Himself would be not so much a king as a father. Halcyon days when over this wide globe God shall rule as a loving father rules in the household. When armies shall be of the past. When the sceptre of love shall sway universally. (c) *A true regard for the people's welfare.* The people do not always know what is for the best. Some might find fault with Gideon, and say he was no patriot. But he understood what was best. He had faith in God's wisdom, and was not to be swerved from his principles. Submit to divine rulership. Here learn that a man may *do his best and seemingly fail.* Gideon before his age. His attempt to establish a more settled form of government ended in disaster and in crime. "His mind rose above the state of things and men," so we may apply to him what has been said of Scipio Africanus,—“his spirit was solitary and kingly; he was cramped by living amongst those as

his equals whom he felt fitted to guide as from a higher sphere; and he retired to his native, Ophrah, to breathe freely, since he could not fulfil his natural calling to be a hero-king." *The path of duty is the way to glory.* Better the royalty of doing one's duty than the royalty of a crown. Kingship independent of adventitious titles. Gideon a king. True the testimony of Zeba and Zalmunna—As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king. Kingliest men have not always worn jewelled crowns. Cromwell a king, wanting only the title. "It is certain that he was, to the last, honoured by his soldiers, obeyed by the whole population of the British Islands, and dreaded by all foreign powers, that he was laid among the ancient sovereigns of England with funeral pomp such as London had never before seen, and that he was succeeded by his son Richard as quietly as any king had ever been succeeded by any Prince of Wales." *Men at their best* when washed from their sins in the blood of Christ, are thus made kings and priests unto God and his Father.

WM. BURROWS, B.A.

### The Gist of the Gospel.

"COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOUR, AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST."—*Matt.* xi. 28.



THESE marvellously simple, and yet unutterably sublime words, present the main points of the gospel; and, obedience to them, constitutes the grand decisive crisis in the human soul. Fresh with undying beauty, and fragrant with the breath of heaven, these words will never lose their charm and power. Full of spirit and life, and adapted



and adequate to meet the moral wants of man, they shall remain unrepealed and unexhausted down to the end of time. May we catch the music of the Saviour's voice, and the meaning of His words, as we come once more to consider His great invitation. These words suggest something concerning *sin, man, Christ, and Christianity.*

I. *The tyranny of sin.* Doubtless, primarily, the words referred to yokes and burdens which the rigid ritual of the old economy — especially when explained and enforced by arrogant priests — imposed upon its devotees. From such work and weariness, Christ called His hearers to accept His lighter burden and His easier yoke. He would give rest that could not be obtained from Moses or the law. Ceremonialism is burdensome; the uniformity and monotony of Ritualism are wearisome; sin is tiresome and tyrannical. (a) *It is a weariness to man's mind.* The giddy round of mere worldly pleasure, the indulgence in sensual gratifications, exhaust the physical strength, and weary the mental powers. Disobedience, doubt, departure from God, destroy peace; there is no peace for the wicked. (b) *It is a weight upon man's heart.* A sense of guilt is like a mill-stone on the breast; and, evil habits indulged in, are like heavy manacles and fetters upon the limbs, beneath which men writhe and groan. Satan is a great tyrant, and makes the way of the transgressor very hard. Sin not only leaves a stain upon the conscience, but strikes its sting into the heart. The sinner, away from Christ, is weary, and heavy laden, under the thralldom of Satan, and the tyranny of sin.

“ He is the free man, whom the truth makes free,  
And all are slaves beside.”

We have here suggested :—

II. *The free agency of man.* In all our Lord's invitations to men, He addressed them as rational and responsible beings. He did not command, so much as *entreat*. He presented reasons, and motives, as the base of moral action. Men are not tools, or machines, but free accountable creatures ; and here deference is paid to the power of choice. God, by His servants, through the old dispensation, had thus dealt with men ; and Christ gathers up all those voices in one grand appeal. Those who heard His voice were to "*come* ;" *voluntarily, gladly, earnestly, immediately* ; they were to "*take*" His yoke, bend their necks, and put both hands to His service. The conditions of salvation are the same to-day. We have to beseech men to be reconciled to God : to give themselves unto Him, and to take of the water of life freely.

We have suggested :—

III. *The Sovereignty of Christ.* The invitations, as well as the character and conduct of Christ, were distinctly unique. He was the way to the Father, and the Father's house, and taught His disciples to seek to become perfect even as their Father in heaven ; but, unlike all other teachers who had preceded Him, He called attention to Himself, and identified Himself with His own message. He did not call men to Moses and the Prophets, or to what they said about Him. He did not invite men to creeds, or rites, or ceremonies, but to *Himself*. They were to come to Him, obey Him, and become like Him. He was not only "Prophet" to teach, and "Priest" to atone, but "King" to reign. In all the *dignity* and *deity* of His Messiahship, He

stood regally forth, and with sovereign voice exclaimed, "Come unto *ME* and *I* will give you rest." Had Christ been only a good man, or the best of men, such an assertion would have been blasphemy, and incompatible with such goodness. It is to a *living, loving, personal* Redeemer the Gospel calls men to-day. Christ is the proper object of worship, and the sole source of spiritual blessing to man. God still supplies all our need, out of His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Let us but come to Christ, He is able and willing to give the rest we need for time and eternity.

We have also suggested:—

IV. *The sufficiency and satisfactoriness of Christianity.*

In the previous dispensation, God had given mankind *some* light upon moral subjects; had shown how sin could be forgiven, peace enjoyed, and heaven opened; but, the light was only as the grey daybreak, compared with the sunlight of the Saviour's teaching. He taught clearly how sins might be forgiven, as well as paid fully the penalty due to them. He showed how peace could be enjoyed—even His own peace—by those who became His disciples. He brought life and immortality to light; and, by abolishing death, answered fully the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Rest of conscience, by the removal of guilt; rest of heart in the knowledge and love of God; rest of hope, in the prospect of heaven—all given by genuine Christianity. The sincere believer in Christ can look *backward, around, and beyond*, and be at rest, while the divine words ring in his ears—"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

CONCLUSION. We see here (I.) *Man's greatest need*—"Rest." Sin has brought disquietude into all the

powers of the mind, and all the faculties of the heart ; it has broken the peace between man and God. (II.) *Man's greatest Benefactor.* Christ, the best of all Being, with the best of all blessings, offering rest—full, free, and for ever, to all who will come to Him. (III.) *Man's tremendous responsibility.* He has the power of choice ; can accept, or reject, the priceless blessings held out to him by the hand of Christ ; can *come to* or *depart from* Him now ; and thus decide whether he shall “*come*” or “*depart*” at the day of final separation. O, believe, and enter into rest now ; live to the Lord, and die in the Lord ; then, of you, as of all the blessed dead—it shall be said—“they rest from their labours and their works do follow them.”

F. W. BROWN.

## THE REIGN OF CHRIST OR CHRISTIANITY.

“FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT MEAT AND DRINK ; BUT RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND PEACE, AND JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST.”—*Romans* xiv. 17.



IN every period of its history, the religion of Christ has met with opposition. The aim of our Lord is to make His disciples “holy even as He is holy,” hence He encounters a steadfast enemy in the corruption of our common nature. Inward dislike breaks forth into outward resentment. His prediction is soon fulfilled in the experience of His first followers ; “if they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” Accordingly, Paul testifies that “in every city, bonds and



afflictions abide with me." But depravity and persecution are not the only foes of the faith. Within the borders of Christian churches themselves circumstances sometimes arise adverse to their peace and prosperity. So was it at first. Churches planted even by apostolic hands became the scenes of contention and strife. Converts to "the truth as it is in Jesus" came from both Jews and Gentiles. They professed to acknowledge "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." But their former life and habits had been widely different, and hence disputes on minor matters continually arose. Both embraced Christ as the only Saviour and became the subjects of His kingdom, but they did so, each with his own peculiar views and feelings. The Gentile coming from his pagan darkness, "turned from idols to serve the living and true God." In doing so he felt that his heathenism must now be abandoned at once and for ever; that old associations must be broken up; that the elements of his former faith must not be carried along with him over the threshold of the church; for "What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Far otherwise was it with the believing Jew. His position was peculiar. He approached Christianity from different ground. He belonged to the favoured nation who for centuries had enjoyed "much advantage every way," but chiefly that to them had been "committed the oracles of God." What was Christianity itself but the fulfilment of promises made to his fathers, to "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?" What but the unfolding of powers, the germs of which had long slumbered in his religion, in "the law and the Prophets?" The Gentile might

make short work of it, and readily relinquish the follies of his fathers. The Jew cannot part with his Past so easily. Ancient usages cleave to him. Old associations are sacred and strong. He gladly acknowledges the Messiah and enters into communion with His people, but he cannot hastily shake off his attachment to the mere ceremonies of his former faith.

Hence arose within the primitive churches, controversies and "cases of conscience," requiring unusual wisdom to adjust or remove. The believing Jew (for example) still held the rite of circumcision binding, and wished to enforce it on his Gentile brother. He had honest scruples about the observance of holy days, esteeming "one day above another." He had, moreover, conscientious objections to the use of certain meats. For according to the law of Moses, some animals were clean and others were unclean. On all such points the believing Gentile felt free. He was at liberty to eat of all meats alike and acted accordingly. But the freedom of the one became an offence to the other. He who revolted at animal food, could not quietly sit by and see his brother partake of it. How were such cases to be decided? How are cases similar in their nature to be decided now? The Apostle Paul, guided by the Spirit of Inspiration, supplies the answer. In this chapter he administers counsel appropriate to each of the disputing parties. But having done so, he lays down for their guidance and for ours, a great truth which is sufficient to solve all such cases of conscience. It is this, "*The kingdom of God, (or, the rule and reign of Christ among men,) is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost.*" True religion consists not in the observance of outward forms, but in the

possession of an inward life; not in usages touching the sustenance of the body, but in spiritual privileges and moral habits affecting the welfare of the soul. The Jew might rigidly abstain from certain meats, and yet his religion might after all prove to be a mere shell of formality, enclosing no kernel of life. The professing Gentile might err in the opposite extreme. Unfettered by forms, he may be tempted to make a merit of his freedom, asserting it with a needless vehemence so as to offend the weaker conscience of the Jew. They are taught, that "the kingdom of God" lies in neither the one nor the other alone, but in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

In these few plain words, you have placed before you the unchanging elements, the life and essence of true religion. Christianity is here defined and enforced not as theory but as a matter of human experience; not in its formal laws, in its doctrines, but in its practical working and happy fruits, as exhibited in the hearts and lives of believing men. Consider then these three great words as they occur in the text.

I. THE REIGN OF CHRIST OR CHRISTIANITY IS "RIGHTEOUSNESS."

HERE the term "righteousness" points not so much to privilege as to practice, not so much to position as to character; to personal holiness and integrity. It consists in hearty obedience to the commands of our reigning Lord, of whom it is written, "the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness; thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity." It consists in the habitual imitation of Christ as our example, Who was pronounced to be "the Holy One and the Just;" Who "did no sin, neither was guile found in

His mouth.” It consists in moral rectitude, manifesting itself in the detail of daily life; in truthful speech, in consistent conduct, in upright deportment,—in loyalty to religious conviction, in a sacred regard to the just and the right in all our dealings with men. If you, who read these words, happily possess this personal righteousness, you will gratefully value it as an evidence that your soul is in living union with “the Lord our righteousness,” and that your religion is a blessed reality, and not a mere empty name. And if the solemn protest of Christ and His apostles against religious formalism had taken full effect—if the thing were clean gone from the world—if it no longer lingered within the pale of Christendom—if the barren disputes which distracted primitive churches did not still in various forms survive—if we did not meet with them in our own land, nor hear of their sad influence in others, we might perhaps allow the question to pass as one peculiar to the Christianity of the first century. But, alas, we know, that as in every age, so also in our own, there is a tendency among men (in some quarters, at least) to substitute the shadow for the substance, an outward ritual for an inward power. Important sections of the Church are often agitated by disputes of the most trifling character. Recent wars, and existing rumours of wars have found their rise in controversies over points of form which, compared with the weightier matters of the law, are but as “dust in the balance.” Moreover, by some bearing the name of Christ, attention is so far given to the adjustment of the mere externals of religious worship, until one fears that Christianity as a thing of glorious life and power is well-nigh forgotten. Over all such scenes of puerile debate and



solemn trifling, the Spirit of the Master seems to break forth in tones of indignant remonstrance. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known Me? Have ye not yet apprehended the nature and genius of My kingdom? Think not so much of meats and drinks, of fasts and feasts, of forms and modes, of times and seasons, of attitudes and orders. 'What is the chaff to the wheat?' 'Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in nowise enter the kingdom of heaven.' 'Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' Irrespective of place and party, be it known unto you, that 'in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.' Be ye sure that in the Divine estimation, moral rectitude is the chief consideration. And in the balances of the sanctuary, one faithful act of Christian duty done in the fear of God, outweighs the worth of a thousand forms. For true religion is not meat and drink, but 'Righteousness.'"

II. THE REIGN OF CHRIST OR CHRISTIANITY IS "PEACE." It is obvious that, whilst this term includes that inward personal peace "which passeth all understanding," in the present instance it points mainly to the *manifestation* of a peaceful spirit towards others. In the case of the Roman Christians, not only were the matters in dispute of minor importance, but the *spirit* of contention they fostered, together with the alienation and bitterness which such disputes inevitably produced, were utterly unbecoming their position as members of the same community, and were utterly at variance with that "peace" which is the essence of Christianity. Interposing to settle their differences, the apostle

wisely deals for the most part with the Gentile convert, perceiving that he is most tempted, although he deems himself, and indeed is, in regard to the point in dispute, most correct. Paul virtually says to him, Touching the observance of days, and the use of meats, I agree with *you*. Your views are right, and those of your Jewish brother are wrong. But you make too much of this point, and carrying your freedom too far, grieve the conscience of your Jewish brother, and hence already come alienated affections and divided hearts. Now division and strife are foreign to the genius of the Lord's kingdom, whose aim is peace and concord. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, (by all means) but not to doubtful dispensations."

Here lies a lesson which Christians of every age need to remember. Strong and spiritual ties bind together in real union all who "love the Lord Jesus Christ." But this deep union is sorely and sadly disturbed, when formalism magnifies into absurd importance the most trifling ceremony, or sectarianism exaggerates its peculiar distinctions beyond all reason and proportion. Around some minor point of faith or antiquated church usage the spirit of contention gathers. The occasion may be positively puerile; it may be the shape of a table, the cut or the colour of a robe. Often it happens that the smaller the matter the fiercer the strife. Hence come unseemly exhibitions; protracted and expensive lawsuits, newspaper reports and exposures;\*

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\* Even to-day, here in England, clergymen are incarcerated on account of attachment to certain ritual observances. For instance, Rev. Pelham Dale in Holloway Gaol, Rev. R. Enraght in Warwick Prison.

hence come humiliating spectacles of learned men, grown grey in the public service, gravely debating for weeks in succession in our ecclesiastical courts, (as though they belonged to the Christian religion) points of form the most trivial and absurd; things which can hardly become matter of grave discussion without a conscious sacrifice of self-respect. Amid such scenes of solemn trifling we seem to hear again the Saviour's reproofing voice; "My followers, ye are clearly mistaken in your conceptions of the nature of my kingdom. This display of misplaced zeal, mingled with animosity touching forms and ceremonies, constitutes *no* part of true religion. The spirit of separation and strife thus engendered is absolutely opposed, not to the accidents merely but to the *essential* life of my service and reign. Moreover, an onlooker might well think that your heat and violence had been aroused by some daring assault on the substance of Christianity. He might naturally say, 'Something of vital importance must be at stake here; they are contending not for the appendages but for the foundations of the kingdom; they are rallying around not the mere scaffolding, but the pillars of the temple.' When, lo! he discovers that the occasion of this strife has been some one of the many things that perish in the using!" As Christians, then, in all your intercourse, seek to avoid giving needless offence; "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Points of religious principle and truth you are to maintain at any cost. But in matters of minor moment our Lord asks you to play the man. If fuller light has been granted to you, show it in your superior

self-control. He asks you in all such cases to bear and forbear, to give and forgive. And that too for your own sake. A man addicted to scruples and crotchets may in controversy carry his point ; but after all, the victory is dearly bought, when the crotchet or scruple, which is as mere brass, has been paid for in the golden coin of peace. Moreover, graver work awaits us. We are summoned to a higher warfare, attended with nobler victories. But divisions in the camp make us appear weak before the common foe. "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace."

III. THE REIGN OF CHRIST OR CHRISTIANITY IS "JOY." On the subject of personal religion worldly men often make great mistakes. They are apt to think, that to be a Christian, is to lose the sunlight of life, to plunge into a region of gloom, to carry a mournful countenance and a heavy heart. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Sin has indeed thrown a dark shadow over the world, and in the sorrows which it entails, good men have their share. But the children of God have a joy deep and pure, which the world cannot give and which its trials cannot remove. It is a holy, heavenly joy diffused through the believer's heart by the Indwelling Spirit of light and life. Under His gracious influence every virtue is quickened, knowledge is increased, and the divine favour is felt. By His teaching Christ is revealed, the prospects of heaven are opened, and the hopes of glory are inspired. And thus true Christians are filled "with joy and hope in believing, through the power of the Holy Ghost." And let it be observed too that this "joy" is mentioned in the text, not as something barely possible, and rarely reached in the kingdom of God on earth, but as one of its *essential*



elements, as one of its permanent enjoyments. Nor is the order in which these three great characteristics of Christianity are set forth, without significance ; it is the divine order in which they arise and become manifest, First *righteousness*, then *peace*, crowned by the emotions of a sacred *joy* ; the Christian life in its root, its leaf, and flower ; “ the wisdom that is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits.” Be it ours to exhibit this trinity of Christian virtues not merely in our professions and Sabbath songs of praise, but in our daily life. Let us so live in close communion with the Father that the world may have evidence of an inner joy, in our cheerful countenances, serene tempers, and hopeful hearts.

Brother, know you what these things are ? Examine yourself. Have you that righteousness, “ that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord ? ” “ As much as lieth in you ” do you “ live peaceably with all men ? ” Is your heart ever gladdened by the joy, which is sometimes “ unspeakable and full of glory ? ” If so, “ happy are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you.” If so, you will be careful not to judge other Christians by narrow standards. You will feel sure that “ righteousness, peace, and joy ” are not the exclusive privilege of any one sect. Happily they may be found in various degrees in all. And you will admit that however Christians of other communions may differ from you on minor points, if in their spirit and life they exhibit the grand essentials of “ the kingdom,” they are entitled not merely to your forbearance, but to your admiration and esteem.

And lastly, “ If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them.” Pray and labour for the progress of

our Lord's kingdom in the world. The enemies of Christianity are never asleep. They seek to retard its march and to weaken its influence by grossly misrepresenting its nature and claims. Caricatures of religion are never wanting. And we ourselves may but meanly set it forth. But, freed alike from the puerilities of formalism and from the rancours of sectarianism, let the world through our lips and life be made to know, that the Christian religion is not mere adherence to a creed, is not ceremony, is not controversy, is not priestcraft, but that its very essence is expressed in this short and noble summary, "RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND PEACE, AND JOY IN THE HOLY GHOST."

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## *Germes of Thought.*

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### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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#### **An Ideal Preacher.**

"AND I SAW ANOTHER ANGEL FLY IN THE MIDST OF HEAVEN, HAVING THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL TO PREACH UNTO THEM THAT DWELL ON THE EARTH, AND TO EVERY NATION, AND KINDRED, AND TONGUE, AND PEOPLE."—*Rev. xiv. 6.*

INTERPRETATIONS of this marvellous book

abound, but he must be regarded as more ignorant than intelligent — more presumptuous than pious, who professes to have reached and developed its true meaning. In this chapter we read of no less than seven angels or

messengers actively employed in preparing the great harvest of the world. "The angel of good news (ver. 6, 7); the angel proclaiming the doom of the great world city (ver. 8); the angel who warns men against the mark of the wild beast (ver. 9—12); the angel of comfort (ver. 13) the angel of the wheat harvest (ver. 14—16); the angel of the vintage (ver. 17—20); the angel of fire (ver. 18). But before these we are shown a vision of the servants of the Lamb."

It is legitimate, and useful, it may be, to look at the text as symbolising the *ideal preacher*. Looking at it in this light we observe concerning the ideal preacher—

I. That his THEME is GLORIOUS. "The everlasting gospel," or "glad tidings." Observe First: It is a *gospel*. That is "good news" or "glad tidings."

It is a message not of divine partiality, or divine wrath to the world, but of divine love. The love of the Great Father for His fallen children. "God so loved the world." Observe Secondly: It is an *ever-enduring* gospel. "Everlasting gospel." Everlasting (1) Because its elementary truths are absolute. These truths are the existence of God as Maker and Manager of the universe—the obligation of all moral beings to love Him supremely because of His supreme goodness, &c., &c. These are mere specimens of the truths that abound in the gospel, and as such they cannot die out, they must continue as the laws of nature. Continue, not only midst all the revolutions of time, but midst all the cycles of eternity. (2) Because its redemptive provisions are complete. Its special mission is to effect man's restoration to

the knowledge, image, and enjoyment of his Maker. It has all the elements and powers for the purpose. Nothing is lacking, nothing can be added to it. It is complete. It is "everlasting" in the sense that the sun is everlasting, because it contains all that the centre of the planetary system requires to fulfil its purpose. Thus it contains the things that cannot be moved. Thirdly: It is a *world-wide* gospel. "To preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kingdom and tongue." This means that it is not for a sect or a class but for *humanity*. It is for man as man irrespective of his colour, his country, his character. (1) It is a *necessity* to all mankind. It is the supreme necessity of unregenerate mankind, the world over, and the ages through. If man is to be happy he must have

it. It is not merely adapted to him, it is *essential* to him. (2) It is *equal* to all mankind. It is not like a feast prepared for so many and no more, it is more like a perfect piece of music having in it an exhaustless power — a power as capable of charming all souls as one, pouring its thrilling and inspiring influence over all lands, down through all times, with unabated power.

Such, then, is the theme which the ideal preacher has to propound, not the speculations of the theologists or the crotchets of a sect, not the crudities of his own brain—but the "Everlasting Gospel." What a sublime mission! Another remark suggested concerning the ideal preacher is—

II. That his MOVEMENTS ARE EXPEDITIOUS. "Fly in the midst of heaven,"

He is to move not like ordinary terrestrial beings on the earth, but rather like the swift fowls of the air, impulses excited, eyes dilated, pinions expanded—darting on their ethereal way. It is characteristic of an ideal preacher that he is expeditious. He is not a drone, he is on fire. He is instant in “season and out of season,” like his great Original; he worketh while it is called to-day, knowing the “night cometh, when no man can work.” Why thus expeditious? First: *The message is urgent.* The world is guilty, about being damned; it bears pardon. The world is diseased, about dying; it bears elements of life. The world is enthralled, a captive of the arch enemy of the universe; it brings liberty. Secondly: *The time is short.* Short not merely when compared with a future life, but with the

work necessary to be done. There is not a moment to spare. “To-day, saith the Spirit.” The Spirit knows the urgency of the work, and the time necessary for its fulfilment. Thirdly: *Life is uncertain.* Uncertain both for the preacher and his hearers. “Boast not thyself of to-morrow, thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Hence the necessity of this expeditious movement. Another remark suggested concerning the ideal preacher is

III. That his SPHERE IS ELEVATED. “Fly in the midst of heaven,” or in mid heaven. It is the characteristic of all truly regenerated men, that they are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit; that they set their affections on things above, that though in the world, they are not of the world; that they live in heavenly places. All these representations mean that they



live and move on a level, high up and distinct from the level on which worldly men live and work. Like Christ, they have meat to eat that the world knows nothing of; that they are separate from sinners. This is pre-eminently the case with the ideal preacher. He moves above the highest; He does not mind "earthly things." Uninfluenced by worldly motives, despising worldly aims and fashions, towering like an angel above them all. Ah me! how different this ideal to the actual conventional preachers. Do they move

through mid heaven? Do they not rather crawl on the earth, trade even in the gospel, and make gain of godliness? The great reason why preaching is so ineffective now; is because we preachers move not in this elevated sphere, but are down with the common herd in spirit.

CONCLUSION.—Such, then, is the *ideal preacher*, and all church history shows that the men who have approached nearest to this ideal have achieved the greatest victories for souls — Paul, Augustine, Whitfield, Wesley, &c.

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### The True Work of Life.

"AND THE WORK OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL BE PEACE."—*Isaiah* xxxii. 17.

Man is essentially an active being. He has faculties whose vigour increases by action, and impulses, and motives that grow in intensity by action. Inaction is death, wrong action is hell, right

action is bliss. Our subject is *true life work*.

I. The NATURE of true life work—the work of righteousness. What is righteous work? First: Working by *right law*. God has established a law

to regulate all action and motion throughout His empire. For dead matter, for irrational life, for moral mind there is law. What is the law by which mind is to be regulated? It is the *will* of God, not expediency. Of expediency, we are no safe, no correct judges. Not the will of states or churches, but the will of God. This is the only standard of right. To it all characters should be conformed; by it all destinies will be determined. This will is revealed in *nature*. But the revelation is difficult to interpret. It is revealed in *Christ*. There it can be clearly read and easily appreciated. He embodied the great moral code. To work by right law, therefore, is to follow Christ. It involves: Secondly: Working by a right law from a *right motive*. A mere conformity to the letter of the law, if it could be obtained,

is not righteousness. Were it possible for all our works to be in perfect agreement with the written law, unless the inspiring motive was right, there would be no righteousness. What is the right motive? *Supreme* love for our *Maker*. We must keep the law not from the fear of hell, or the hope of heaven, but from a predominant affection for the law-giver.

It is noteworthy that the work of righteousness is not a work to be limited to any department of action. Man, in order to fulfil the functions of his being on earth, has a large variety of employments—physical, intellectual, moral, social, and religious, &c. Righteousness must run through all, control all, subordinate all.

The man who is not righteous in all his actions, is not righteous in any. "He that is unjust in the least is unjust in the

much." Whatsoever we do, then, in word or deed, in business, in politics, in art, we should do all righteously, all according to the will of God.

II. The BLESSEDNESS of true life work. "Shall be peace." First: This is true of *individuals*. The man who is righteous in all his works will have peace, peace with his conscience, undisturbed by remorse—peace with his affections. There will be no collision or tumult, all will flow smoothly as an unrippled river—peace with his Maker—no dread, no forebodings. What a blessed state of mind is this. Peace follows righteousness. It never follows wrong, it flees from it. Secondly: This is true of *families*. Let all the members of a family, parents and children, brothers and sisters, do the work of righteousness, and there will be no disturbances, no collisions,

no disharmonies. The peace will flow as a river. Thirdly: This is true of *Churches*. Let the minister, officers and members, of a church all do the work of righteousness, there would be no divisions all would be united in one. As attraction in the material world harmonises the planets by holding them to the centre, so righteousness will harmonise all the members of a church, by linking them to Christ the embodiment, of the right. Fourthly: This is true of *nations*. Let all the individuals that compose a nation do the work of righteousness and there will be an end to all strifes, litigations, riots, and robberies, battles and bloodshed, all intestine conflicts and international wars.

CONCLUSION. Learn the transcendent worth of the Gospel. The great object of Christ's mission was

to promote righteousness. His life was a revelation of righteousness, His death a demonstration of righteousness, His whole history one great motive to righteousness. "He will not fail, nor be discouraged, until He has set judgment (or rectitude) on the earth." Righteous-

ness is the supreme want of humanity. Christ alone can supply it. Legislation has tried and failed. So has philosophy, so have poets and priest-hoods, and so, too, has civilisation. 'Christ alone can establish righteousness.

### Who Shall be Greatest ?

"THEN THERE AROSE A REASONING AMONG THEM, WHICH OF THEM SHOULD BE GREATEST."  
—*Luke ix. 46.*

The context is profoundly interesting and instructive. [Explain it.] The dispute here between the disciples is as old and as wide as the race. Deep down, in the heart of humanity, is the instinctive desire for distinction. In all circles there are those who seek to become, or to achieve, that which will give them some kind of pre-eminence over their

class and their associates. Let us look at

I. The response which THE WORLD gives to this question. "Who is the greatest?" It gives at least two leading answers. First: The *Wealthy*. He who holds the largest amount of this world's property is generally considered the greatest man; greatest because he can dress in the most costly attire, live in the most magnificent dwelling, command the most qualified and numer-

ous attendants, move about with the greatest pageantry and pomp. Hence all struggle for this distinction—rising early, sitting up late, plying their faculties to the utmost extent, in order to amass a fortune. The world answers Secondly: The *Influential*. To be up above contemporaries, to dazzle them with their brilliance, and to awe them by their power. This, says the world, is greatness. Hence anything that can contribute to this, money, birth, titles, achievements, intellectual, military, or social, are eagerly sought. To have your name on the tongue of millions, emblazoned in the gossip of journals, and your power felt afar; this is greatness, says the world. The world says therefore, that the greatest man is he who owns the most property, and exerts the most influence. Let us look at

II. The response which

CHRISTIANITY gives to this question. First: Its answer is *not material wealth*. It makes light of this: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world?" Again, a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things he hath," &c. In this it agrees with the old stoical philosophy. In classic literature the rich man without goodness was pictured as a giant, crushed beneath mountains of gold. It is said that Croesus, the last king of Lydia, once asked Solon, the philosopher of Athens, who was his guest, whether he did not think him (Croesus), the happiest of men. What was the answer of the sage? He said that the happiest man he knew was one Tullus, a poor man of Athens, who was contented and trusted; who had seen his children's children rise to positions of honesty and usefulness,



and then had died in the service of his country. "But," said Croesus, "am I not then the second happiest man?" "Nay, two youths I know, the sons of the priestess, faithful to their mother, reverencing their gods, who on one occasion, when the oxen were not ready, were harnessed into the priestess' car, and dragged her to the temple, where she asked the gods to give them the choicest blessing in their power, and they bestowed upon them the gift of peaceful rest; and they fell asleep for ever in the temple of the gods." All the possessions, all the jewels, all the rich and gaudy furniture of Croesus, as they were severally displayed by his command, could not change Solon's judgment. But it chanced soon afterwards, that Cyrus, King of Persia, overcame Croesus, and condemned him to be burnt alive; and whilst

he was enduring this slow and painful death, he cried in his agony, "Solon! Solon! Solon!" The king asked the explanation of the cry, and was told the incident just related. Solon's contempt of wealth had the effect of depreciating the false estimate of Croesus, and of guiding and restraining the cupidity and cruelty of Cyrus. Aye, both the gospel and philosophy show that there is no greatness in the possession of mere material wealth. Secondly: The answer is *not worldly influence*. In all ages the most contemptible men have obtained immense influence in the world of letters, in the world of commerce, in the world of politics, in the world of arms. A person may be a great author, merchant, politician, warrior, and yet a miserably small *man*. Even our own Wellington as a man had but little in

him that would command the homage of the human conscience. It is one thing to be great as a functionary, another thing to be great as a man. What wonderful words are these! "And Jesus perceiving the thought of their hearts, took a child and set him by Him and said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth Me, and whosoever shall receive me receiveth Him that sent Me, for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great."

CONCLUSION. The answer, then, to the question, "Who shall be the greatest?" of the world and of Christianity agree in this, that both imply *wealth* and *influence*. But the wealth and the influence are in their nature as wide asunder as the poles. The wealth on which Christianity conditions greatness is the wealth of pure

and noble thoughts, of generous impulses, of holy aspirations, of Divine resolves. In one word, the wealth of a Christly character. These are treasures, we are told, laid up in heaven, that is in the great spiritual empire of Christ, "Where neither moth nor rust can corrupt." And the *influence* on which Christianity makes greatness to depend is not like the influence of the world, that of a meteor or a comet, which makes men talk and stare, but the influence of the sunbeam and the dew, that at once quicken the dead germs into life, and nourish the life into beauty and fruit. It is the influence arising from being "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

The greatest man on earth in a worldly sense will have one day to feel profoundly what our great dramatist has expressed in relation to one who had

touched the highest point  
of human pre-eminence.

“Nay, then, farewell !  
I have touched the highest  
point of all my greatness ;

And from that full meridian of  
my glory  
I haste now to my setting ; I  
shall fall  
Like a bright exhalation in the  
evening  
And no man see me more.”

## Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

No. VII.

### BLESSED CHRISTIAN POSSIBILITIES.

“AND THIS I SAY, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BEGUILE YOU WITH ENTICING WORDS. FOR THOUGH I BE ABSENT IN THE FLESH, YET AM I WITH YOU IN THE SPIRIT, JOYING AND BEHOLDING YOUR ORDER, AND THE STEDFASTNESS OF YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST. AS YE HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK YE IN HIM ; ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM, AND STABLISHED IN THE FAITH, AS YE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, ABOUNDING THEREIN WITH THANKSGIVING.” *Col. ii. 4-7.*

THESE words of apostolic desire open to us three blessed Christian possibilities, a possibility to the Church, to the individual, and to the inner life of each.

I. THE FORMIDABLE STRENGTH POSSIBLE TO A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

The apostle declares that it gave him joy to behold the condition of the Colossian Church, indeed the words he uses

describe his looking again and again because of the joy it gave him. What gave him such joy? (1) Their *orderly array*. (2) Their *solid front*, as the word “stedfastness” here depicts. In the centre of the military world, and made a soldier’s guard, no wonder Paul lays his hands on metaphors so vividly suggesting precision, compactness, obedience. He sees how

a church can be perfectly marshalled for its mission; the mission of a Holy War against Ignorance, Pride, Selfishness, Sin. Well for a church to have its every member, "a defender of the faith."

## II. THE CONSTANT GROWTH POSSIBLE TO THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

The growth implies life.

(1) *The origin of the life is here described.* It is "having received Christ."

As Simeon took the holy infant into his arms, the true Christian receives Christ into his trust, thoughts, affections. (2)

*The progress of the life is here described.* The

three metaphors used, of a path, a tree, a structure, teach the same lesson of intimate and advancing union with Christ.

Whether walking, or being rooted, or being built, it is all in Christ.

"Thou, my Life, oh let me be, Rooted, grafted, built on Thee."

## III. THE PERPETUAL THANKSGIVING POSSIBLE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

This summons to thanksgiving is a sort of refrain throughout the epistle. (ch. i. 10, iii. 15, 17, iv. 2). Faber inquires whether there can be true worship without joy? Because he asserts, "Worship is not fear of God, or love of God, but delight in God." This is Paul's exposition and doctrine, for there must be joy in thanksgiving. And perpetual thanksgiving is the true spirit of those who are (1) *Objects of perpetual Providence.* (2) *Subjects of perpetual Grace.* Therefore abound with thanksgiving.

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## No. VIII.

## THE COMPLETE MAN.

"BEWARE LEST ANY MAN SPOIL YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT, AFTER THE TRADITION OF MEN, AFTER THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, AND NOT AFTER CHRIST. FOR IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY. AND YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM, WHICH IS THE HEAD OF ALL PRINCIPALITY AND POWER: IN WHOM ALSO YE ARE CIRCUMCISED WITH THE CIRCUMCISION MADE WITHOUT HANDS, IN PUTTING OFF THE BODY OF THE SINS OF THE FLESH BY THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST: BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM, WHEREIN ALSO YE ARE RISEN WITH HIM THROUGH THE FAITH OF THE OPERATION OF GOD, WHO HATH RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD. AND YOU, BEING DEAD IN YOUR SINS AND THE UNCIRCUMCISION OF YOUR FLESH, HATH HE QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH HIM, HAVING FORGIVEN YOU ALL TRESPASSES. BLOTting OUT THE HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES THAT WAS AGAINST US, WHICH WAS CONTRARY TO US, AND TOOK IT OUT OF THE WAY, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS: AND HAVING SPOILED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, HE MADE A SHOW OF THEM OPENLY, TRIUMPHING OVER THEM IN IT. LET NO MAN THEREFORE JUDGE YOU IN MEAT, OR IN DRINK, OR IN RESPECT OF AN HOLYDAY, OR OF THE NEW MOON, OR OF THE SABBATH DAYS."—*Col. ii. 8-16.*

THE one thought around which we may let the many varied, and some of them strange, ideas of this paragraph gather, is the conception of *The Complete Man*. The words teach us:

I. THAT THE COMPLETE MAN IS NOT LED AWAY BY ERROR IN THOUGHT, OR BY EVIL IN

LIFE. Anyone who is so led is incomplete. And the Apostle is here warning his readers to be on their guard, lest, having once been] emancipated from such captivity, they should be insidiously captured again and taken away as prey into such slavery. His words here show (1) *How error in*



*thought and evil in life are closely connected—* (verses 8 and 18). His words here show (2) *The two common causes of such error and evil.* “Traditions of men,” mere superstitions, are the “rudiments of the world,” mere beginnings of knowledge. All such are to be condemned when they are not “after Christ.” That is when they are not (a) doctrines of which He is the Teacher, or (b) doctrines of which He is the ultimate theme.

II. THE COMPLETE MAN DERIVES HIS COMPLETENESS FROM CHRIST. “Ye are complete in Him,” or we might paraphrase it, “ye are filled up from Him.” This paragraph shows what Christ has done for such a man. (1) By Christ he is *separated from evil*, (verses 11, 12). Circumcision was the great symbol of the separation of the Jews; Baptism of

the separation of the Christians. The complete man is as one “circumcised without hands” by Christ; baptised as in a burial by Christ. (2) By Christ *he is made alive to goodness and to God* (verses 12, 13). Such a man is “risen with Christ.” He is a man marked by pre-eminent livingness. (a) *The type of his livingness is here.* The Risen Christ; He who was gloriously alive. (b) *The means of his livingness is here.* Through faith in the mighty power of God, which was triumphantly manifested in the raising of Jesus. (3) By Christ he *is emancipated from guilt*, (verses 14, 15). Most vivid and full are the metaphors describing emancipation from the guilt and from the power of sin. Blotting out handwriting, &c. And all this work of Christ was consummated on Calvary. He like a conqueror nailed to His Cross, “the

writings " that were against us ; on His Cross He openly triumphed over evil. These words tell "How of the Cross He made a throne,  
On which He reigns, a glorious King."

III. CHRIST THUS MAKES MEN COMPLETE BECAUSE OF WHAT HE IS IN HIMSELF. The life of God must be wafted in upon man : borne in upon him. Whence ? From Christ, "in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." There are three thoughts here about Christ. (1) *All* the fulness of God is in Him. He is not a mere emanation of God : not a mere flash of the light, but its brightness ; not a

mere tone of the truth, but the Word. (2) All the fulness of God is *permanent* in Christ. In Him "*dwelleth*." He is a reservoir whose waters never fail. He does not say He has bread or He has water to bestow, but He *is* the Bread of Life, He *is* the Water of Life. The Holy Ghost *abode* on Him. (3) All the fulness of God *was incarnate in His humanity*. It dwelt in Him "bodily." The purity, righteousness, wisdom, compassion, love of God was gathered up in that human life. He was Emanuel, and from His fulness, thus complete, lasting, human, we are fed.

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# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develope, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## PAUL'S SALUTATION.

### No. I.

"Paul and Timotheus, the servants to Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Jesus Christ, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons; grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."—*Philippians* i. 1-2.

"This epistle," says the learned Lewin, "was written during Paul's captivity, *en te tois desmois mon*. Phil. i. 7, and at Rome, iv. 22. And Paul had been long enough a prisoner to have produced great effects both in the Praetorium and elsewhere, i. 13. The long captivity of the Apostle before the date of the letter appears also from this. The Philippians had heard of his imprisonment at

Rome, and had sent him pecuniary relief by the hands of Epaphroditus, i. 7; iv. 18: and Epaphroditus had fallen ill at Rome, ii. 27, the Philippians heard of it, and the report to that effect had gone back from Philippi to Rome, ii. 26. In short, the epistle was written when Paul was in such confident expectation of his release, that he was making arrangements for his departure, and he tells us that his intentions were immediately on being released to send off Timothy to Philippi to learn their state and to bring back word to Paul in the west, and then both were to sail together to the east, and after some little interval Paul hoped to visit Philippi in person."

In this salutation we have three subjects for thought:—

I. THE MOST DIGNIFIED OF ALL OFFICES. “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ.” The apostle does not here assert his apostleship as in some other places, but speaks of himself and Timotheus simply as the servants of Jesus Christ. Now whilst to be a servant of some men and institutions implies degradation, to be the servant of Jesus Christ is to sustain an office the most honourable and glorious; for note the following things connected with this service.

First. *It meets with the full concurrence of conscience.* There are many services in which men are engaged, some most lucrative, some associated with worldly honours, yet they fail to enlist the full concurrence of conscience, nay, conscience often raises its protest against them, and it often happens that the protests are so strong that men have felt bound to resign. But in this service conscience goes with every effort put forth; for to serve Christ is to run with the principles of eternal right, to render to the Almighty His claims, and to all creatures their due.

Secondly. *It affords ample scope for the full development of the soul's faculties.* In how

many services have men to be engaged in this world which only excite and employ certain powers of the mind, leaving all the others in a state of decay and torpor! Millions feel that the work in which they are engaged is so unworthy of their natures that they lack both self-satisfaction and freedom. The services make no demand upon their powers of investigation, speculation, invention, creation, and their central moral sensibilities, all is machinery. But in the service of Christ there is both an urgent demand and an immeasurable scope for the wonderful powers and possibilities of the human soul. In this service men advance with every effort not as the mere creatures of time, but as the offsprings of God and the citizens of the universe. By this service we grow up into Him.

Thirdly. *It is a service that contributes to the well being of all, and the ill being of none.* In all the selfish services of time whilst there may be a contributing to the temporal interests of some, there is an injury inflicted on others, what one gains the other loses. What man has ever made a fortune or risen to power that has not invaded the rights and damaged the interests of others? But in this service good

is rendered to all and evil to none. It is a service of universal benevolence, a service for the common weal, a service that goes against all the ills that afflict the race, and for all the blessings that can enrich and ennoble.

Fourthly. *It is a service that insures the approbation of God and of all consciences in the universe.* Does the service of the politician or the ecclesiastic, or the warrior, secure the approval of Almighty God? Not as such, nor do they secure the approbation of universal conscience. But the service of Christ does. He says "Well done, thou good and faithful servant;" and all consciences with every effort echo the approval. Policy, passion, and prejudice often condemn the genuine servants of Christ, but their consciences never. The law of their moral constitution compels them to say, "Well done" to the right.

Fifthly. *It is a service whose worth is determined not by result, but by motive.* The service of a man in the employ of human masters is estimated not by motive but by results. If the motive be corrupt, utterly selfish, so long as the results contribute to the interests of the master, the servant is pronounced a good one. Not so

with the service of Christ. Motive is everything, though a man may effect in Christianity what may be considered wonderful success, prophesy in abundance, and cast out devils by hosts, he is deemed utterly worthless, only as stubble and fit for the fire. "Though I give my body to be burned and have not charity," &c. What service then approaches this, aye, is comparable to this, in its sublime dignity? To be a servant of Christ is to be the sublimest of prophets, the most divine of priests, the most glorious of kings. In this salutation we have:—

II. THE MOST EXALTED OF ALL STATES. "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Bishop and presbyter are equivalents in the apostolic epistles. Though the two terms have different origins, the one presbyter or elder, a Jewish title, the other bishop or overseer, of heathen origin, used in classic Greek for commissioner. Deacons we find the origin of in Acts i. 6, 7. Now while it is noteworthy that the Philippian Church had its two officers—the bishop and the deacon—these officers were spiritually in the same state as the private members. What was that state? "In Christ Jesus"



the distinction between them and the others was not a distinction of state, but simply of service, or of office, and unless their state had been identical their office would have been invalid. A true Church and all its members must be in Christ Jesus. What does this mean? It is an expression of very frequent occurrence in the writings of the Apostle. *In Christo*. What meaneth it? We can attach three intelligible ideas to the expression.

First. *In His affections as His friends*. When we say that a child is in the heart of its parent, or such a sister is in the heart of her brother, or such a wife in the heart of her husband, we know what it means. In fact all that we really love live in our hearts, they often prompt us to thought, and inspire us to act. Now Christ loves all men, and all men are in His heart, but His love for His friends is special, deep and tender. "Ye are my friends." Every genuine disciple is in the heart of Christ. To be in Christ is to be,

Secondly. *In His school as His pupils*. Christ is a Teacher of absolute truth, a Teacher of humanity. He has established a school, and to all He gives the invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are

heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Now all who enter this school are His disciples. What a Teacher is Christ! "Never man spake like this man." What an inexpressible privilege to be in this school. To be in Christ is to be,

Thirdly. *In His character as their example*. Without figure man everywhere lives in the character of man. The present age lives in the character of the past and so back, the millions of unrenewed men live in the character of Adam, imbibe his selfishness, and practice his disloyalty. All regenerate men live in the character of Christ, appropriate His grand ideas, cherish His Spirit, and imitate His divine virtues, thus they become like Him.

Much more is included in being *in Christ*, but this is sufficient to indicate and to show that it is the most exalted of all states. The man who is in Christ has broken away from the enthralling influence of materialism, is rising to a mastery over external circumstances, and over his carnal

passions and lusts, is towering higher and higher into the regions of unclouded light, and of ineffable joys, and imperishable delights. In this salvation we have—

III. THE MOST PHILANTHROPIC OF ALL ASPIRATIONS. “Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” This is Paul’s general salutation, and is found in almost every epistle. It is also often employed by Peter and John. “Grace” means favour, and the wish expressed by the Apostle is that the divine favour and peace may flow to them from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. What greater blessings than these, God’s favour and God’s peace? And what wishes more philanthropic than these can be conceived of? Most men express philanthropic wishes towards their fellow men at times; some wish health, riches, long life, and great enjoyment, but he who wishes the favour and peace of God, wishes infinitely more than all these. The patriot wishes men to be free, the total abstainer wishes men to be sober, the religious denominationalist wishes men to join his sect, but Paul’s wish here is grander, more comprehensive and divine than these; he wishes men to have the

favour and the peace of God. “Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. \* ”

CONCLUSION. The fundamental question which presses on us is, are we “*in Christ Jesus?*” Not are we in this system or that, in this Church or that, but are we “*in Christ Jesus?*” If so, we are secure from all dangers, ripe for all worlds, and for futurities, on the march of everlasting progress, light and blessedness.

I would live my life in Christo,  
In His holy thoughts and love,  
I would cherish His high purpose,  
In His spirit live and move.  
I would fight my foes in Christo,  
They are many, they are strong;  
In His strength I’ll bear the contest,  
Striving ever ’gainst the wrong.  
Aid me, Lord, to live in Christo,  
Oh! in Christo let me live.

I would find my joy in Christo,  
Joy which earth cannot afford;  
I would drink of that life river  
Streaming from His quickening word.  
I would gain my rights in Christo,  
Rights of freedom and of peace;  
From my guilt and from my bondage  
He alone can give release.  
Aid me, Lord, to serve in Christo,  
Oh! in Christo let me serve.

I would die my death in Christo,  
Breathing in His love I’m blest;  
When this frame to dust returneth,  
I shall enter into rest.  
In that rest I shall adore Him,  
In the strains of sacred love;  
With the ransom’d of all races  
Gather’d in the heavens above.  
Aid me, Lord, to die in Christo,  
Oh! in Christo let me die.

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\* See Homilist, Vol. xlvii., page 30.

# *Homiletical Breviaries.*

No. CCCXXII.

## **The Causes of Ingratitude.**

“BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?”—*Luke xvii. 18.*

THERE is no need to picture this group of ten lepers, with whose hideousness, misery, woe, we are so familiar. Nor can we completely imagine the physical change their healing wrought in all. In nine of them the moral condition is still almost as hideous as leprosy. They are ingrates. And since they stand as specimens of many who are unthankful to God, or ungrateful to man, it may be well to ask what could have been the sources of such ingratitude. “The nine, where?” Thus Christ with censure, sadness, surprise inquires. There are more than nine sources of ingratitude. But there are nine, and each of these men may represent some one. I. One is CALLOUS. He did not feel his misery as much as some, nor is he much stirred now by his return to health. Sullen, torpid, stony men are thankless. Callousness is a common cause of ingratitude. II. One is THOUGHTLESS. He is more like shifting sand than hard stone, but he never reflects, never introspects, never recollects. The unreflecting are ungrateful. III. One is PROUD. He has not had more than his merit in being healed. Why should he be thankful for what his respectability, his station, deserved? Only the humble hearted are truly grateful. IV. One is ENVIOUS. Though healed he has not all that some others have. They are younger, or stronger, or have more friends to welcome them. He is envious. Envy turns sour the milk of thankfulness. V. One is COWARDLY. The Healer is scorned, persecuted, hated. The expression of gratitude may bring some of such hatred on himself. The craven is always a mean ingrate. VI. One is CALCULATING the result of acknowledging the benefit received. Perhaps some claim may arise of discipleship, or gift. VII. One is WORLDLY. Already he has purpose of business in Jerusalem, or plan of pleasures there, that fascinates him, from returning to give thanks. VIII. One is GREGARIOUS. He would have expressed gratitude if the other eight would, but he has no independence, no individuality. IX. One is PROCRASTINATING. By-and-bye. Meanwhile Christ asks, “Where are the nine?”

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No. CCCXXIII.

## The Divine Ministry of Comfort.

"COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE, MY PEOPLE, SAITH YOUR GOD." *Isa.* xl. 1.

There are ministries in the world. There is the Divine ministry of *instruction*. In this ministry nature, history, and the Bible are constantly employed. There is the Divine ministry of Justice. Nemesis is always and everywhere at work, treading on the heels of wrong, and inflicting penalties. In the text we have another ministry—the Divine ministry of *comfort*. The *words* suggest three thoughts concerning this ministry: I. It implies the existence of DISTRESS. Bright and fair as the material world often appears, a sea of sorrow rolls through human souls. The distress is of various kinds (1) *Physical suffering*. Men are everywhere—not only in hospitals, prisons, battle fields—but in private homes, tortured with physical pain. (2) *Social bereavement*. Death is everywhere at work, tearing from the heart the dearest objects of our lives, husbands, wives, parents, children, brothers, sisters, &c. (3) *Secular anxieties*. The great bulk of mankind have to labour hard for their own livelihood, and for the livelihood of those dependent upon them, and what distress they often meet with—weariness, exhaustion, disappointment, purposes broken, efforts successless. (4) *Moral compunction*. Conscience is smitten by remorse, souls haunted with devils, of criminal memories and retributive forebodings. Aye, great is the distress prevailing in the human world. II. It implies the existence of SPECIAL MEANS. All this distress is an *abnormal* state of things. Misery is not an institution of nature, and the creation of God, but the production of the creature. To meet this abnormal state something more than natural instrumentality is required. First: There must be special *provisions*. Those provisions are to be found in the gospel, nay, they are the gospel. To the *physically afflicted* there are presented considerations fitted and intended to enervise the soul, enlow it with magnanimity, to fill it with sentiments and hopes that will raise it, if not above the sense of physical suffering, above its depressing influence. Hence martyrs have sung at the stake. To the *socially bereaved* it brings the glorious doctrine of a future life. It says, "Sorrow not as those without hope," &c. To the *secularly distressed* it unfolds the doctrine of eternal providence. It says to the man who is overwhelmed

in secular disappointments and anxieties, "Your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of these things." "Take no thought for the morrow," &c. To the morally distressed it presents the doctrine of forgiving love, and assures a soul-convicted conscience, "Though your sins be as crimson, they shall be white as snow." Secondly. There must be special *agency*. A physician may know the disease of his patient, his diagnosis may be quite correct, know also the medicines suitable for relief, but if he does not know the precise mode of application he will not succeed. So it is with the gospel. A man to give comfort to another requires a special qualification. The comforting elements must be administered (1) Not officially but humanly. It is not the priest or the preacher that comforts a sorrowing soul; it is the man, the man's face, the man's voice, the man's tone. (2) Not verbosely but sympathetically. Suffering souls are distressed by talk, it was the talk of Job's supposed friends that intensified the agonies of his soul. The moistened eye, the quivering lip, the loving grasp, the tender tones comfort. Thus, "He who came into the world to bind up the broken hearted" comforted. He did not cause His voice to be heard in the street. III. It implies a LIMITED SPHERE. "My people." The whole human family is in distress, but there is only a certain class qualified to receive comfort, those who are here called God's "*people*," and who are they? Those who have surrendered themselves to His will, yielded to His claims, and dedicated themselves to His service. In other words, those who are the disciples and the followers of Jesus Christ. These have their sorrows as well as the great bulk of the race. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." This is the class that have to be comforted. A man to be comforted by the gospel must believe in the gospel. In fact, none but those who have faith in God and in Christ, can accept and appropriate the comforting provisions of the gospel. The gospel has no word of comfort for the impenitent sinner. Trust in God and in His Son, and then in the deepest sorrow you can sing—

"I've found a joy in sorrow  
 A secret balm for pain;  
 A beautiful to-morrow,  
 Of sunshine after rain.  
 I've found a branch of healing,  
 Near every bitter spring;  
 A whispered promise stealing  
 O'er every broken string."



# *The Preacher's Scrap Book.*

In Memoriam—Rev. R. Young, M.A.



AMONG the many able and learned clergymen who have contributed from time to time to the pages of the HOMILIST—such as Rev. W. Webster, M.A., of King's College (Editor of Greek Testament), Rev. Charles Wills, M.A., Vicar of Ventnor, &c.—who have quitted this scene of labour and entered into rest, we have now with profound regret to add another distinguished name. A series of homilies on *Meditations on Anonymous Personages in the Bible* has, as our readers know, appeared in the pages of the HOMILIST from the pen of Rev. R. Young from month to month. For freshness of thought, philosophicalness of arrangement, ripeness of culture, reverence of feeling, catholicity of spirit, and beauty of expression, they will be pronounced by competent judges as almost unsurpassed in the best pulpit literature, either ancient or modern. His surviving friends will, we trust, gather them into a volume, and for the good of clergymen everywhere push them into a wide circulation, for we are certain they will soon find a place in their libraries by the side of Robertson, Brookfield, and Bushnell. We only knew him through his contributions and correspondence; almost every letter from him inspired us with the desire to make his personal acquaintance. Alas! this privilege is now denied us. His photograph has just been placed in our hands. It represents a comparatively young man, with a Teutonic brow, well chiselled features, an expression radiant with intelligence, and tenderly sympathetic in feeling. We have seen letters from eminent University men speaking of him in the highest terms. We can thoroughly believe what Canon Holder, D.D., says of him, "He is a most pleasing and intellectual companion, and his mathematical knowledge is of a high order." Rev. T. H. Chester, M.A., Vicar of South Shields speaking of him as a preacher says, "As a preacher he possesses unusually rare power; indeed, I can confidently say I have never listened to any sermons with equal pleasure." The following

brief sketch of him from the pen of one most intimately acquainted with him will be undoubtedly of great interest to our readers :—

“Robert Young was born at Cork, Ireland, March 10th, 1842. His father, a paymaster in the navy, was killed by being thrown out of his carriage five months before his only child's birth. At the early age of 16, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he took a 1st class in history, 1st class in mathematics, and 1st class in natural science. He took his B.A. and M.A. there, and was then incorporated into St. Alban's Hall, Oxford, and took his M.A. Was ordained Deacon by Bishop Baring, of Durham, in the chapel of Auckland Castle, 1867, and Priest too in the following year. Was first in the Examination of the candidates, both for Deacon's and Priest's Orders, the title of Ordination was given to him by his holding an Assistant Mastership, of the Cathedral Grammar School, Durham. He had to resign that Mastership at the end of three years on account of his health suffering so from the cold temperature. Was then a Master at the Royal Naval School, London. Afterwards took the Head mastership of Ashbourne Grammar School, during which time he married, July 14th, 1874. From the very unhealthy and damp buildings his health again suffered, and he accepted a small country living six miles from Ashbourne, but the mischief was then done, and it was a vain search for health after. During his pastorate at Calton he was ever ready to cheer, encourage, and help all his parishioners, being equally kind to Churchmen and Dissenters; indeed, he always told the latter that however much they differed from him, “he considered himself legally responsible for them, and should always visit them the same as his other parishioners.” Being a man of unbounded energy, with a strong love of work, for work's sake, he soon found a small parish of only 190 inhabitants totally inadequate to his zeal, and he fretted for more work. Still, being a married man, and accustomed for so many years to be in a measure his own master, he did not like to take any but an independent post, and an opening offering in the Cathedral city of Wells, by the advice of his medical man, he left his dear little parish on March 24th, 1880, to be head master of the school at Wells, made soon after his taking that post, into a Cathedral grammar school. During the short time of his life at Wells, his high sense of honour and energy were noticed by many. He suffered agonies of pain the whole time, but bore his sufferings

patiently and uncomplainingly; ever striving to save the feelings of those around him. For the last fortnight he was really dying, but took his own class till the day before his death. On the morning of his death, Oct. 9th, 1880, he felt much better, and was very bright and cheerful to his wife: he then began to get up, and was found by his wife twenty minutes after she had left him, dead.

No one was more ready to meet his Master, or more gentle and considerate to all around him. For months before his death he was heard during a great part of every night repeating psalms and prayers, and his great trouble was, not that he was going to meet his Master, but that his wife and children should be left with straitened means. By the kindness of the Dean and Chapter, his funeral took place at the Cathedral, Wells, on Oct. 13th, 1880. His grave is in the Palm Churchyard, the choristers sung at the grave—

“Oh, God, our help in ages past!  
Our Hope in years to come.”

## *Ministers whom I have known.*

(Continued from Vol., XLVII. page 416.)



SOON after my settling at Stockwell as a young man, there joined my congregation a goodly number of ministers whose names deserve from me a grateful and reverent record. There was *Rev. John Arundel*, for many years the Secretary of London Missionary Society, and much honoured and greatly blessed was he in that responsible position. When I was a boy in Tenby he came round as a deputation from that Society, and I well remember his appearance, text, and manner when preaching in the pulpit of the old Tabernacle. He was of middle height, face somewhat long, head large in proportion to his frame, his eyes greyish, and not large. His expression was most genial, and his manner and tone devout. His text was “He brought me into his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.” His companion in the deputation was John Campbell, the famous African missionary, who afterwards settled as the pastor of the Independent Church, Kingsland. When I saw Mr. Arundel first in

Stockwell Chapel years afterwards, and found that he had settled down as a member of the congregation, I was not a little nervous and overawed in preaching to a man so much my superior in experience and intelligence. He continued a member of the church for many years until the time of his death, and I attended his grave as his minister with a very large concourse of mourning friends. He treated me as a father, and I made him my confidante, and reposed implicitly in the wisdom and kindness of his counsels.

There was *Rev. Mr. Brown*, of Clapham, for a very lengthened period the Chief Secretary of the Bible Society. He had been for a considerable time the minister of Clapham Independent Church, now enjoying the able ministry of *Rev. J. Guinness Rogers*, B. A. Though he lived near to the church where he had been pastor for many years, he did not attend the ministry of his immediate successor, *Rev. J. Hill*; not because in any way, I think, did he disapprove of the ministry of that excellent man, but because of the ungrateful and disrespectful conduct of those whom he had served so devotedly and so long. Thus, alas, it often happens with the Independent minister, people who crowd around him in the early stage of his ministry, grow cold and indifferent after the zenith, and in the afternoon treat him with indifference, and not unfrequently disparage his services. Many an Independent minister whose people in the hey-day of his popularity have disgusted him with their fulsome adulations, have in his declining years turned their backs upon him, and left him to pine away in solitude, and sometimes in starvation. It is not so with clergymen; the rector who has maintained a good reputation and done his work well—like port wine, becomes more appreciated and loved as age advances. In appearance *Mr. Brown* was beneath the average stature. His head was small and round, thickly covered with hair as white as snow, very prim in his appearance, gentlemanly and modest in his demeanour. Although he continued some years—up to his death—a member of my congregation, he seemed so cold, reticent, and reserved that I never had much close intercourse with him. There are men whose souls can never be brought into such contact as to flow and reflow into each other. There are ocean souls that will draw all streams and rivers into them, and there are planet souls that will always keep to their own orbit, and though they circle round the same great centre, will keep many leagues apart.

There was *Rev. Mr. Winchester*, who had been the Independent minister at Worthing for many years. He was an old man, possessing no particular feature to distinguish him either in personelle, or mind—still a man of sterling worth. He continued to attend my ministry until his death. Some time ago I was told that in the Church book at the Chapel at Worthing where he had been minister, there is a “Declaration of Faith,” highly flavoured with Calvinism, and that underneath it one of the ministers who succeeded Mr. Winchester wrote, “I never have believed such rubbish, and I never will.” Truly that Calvinian creed is worse than rubbish, it is a calumny on the infinite Father.

There was *Rev. Samuel Spink*, who had been minister at Winbourne, Dorsetshire, for some years. He and his family, who co-operated with me heartily in every good work, attended Stockwell Chapel for a long time. He was a thin man, not tall, lame, and excessively nervous. He was well educated, well read, very thoughtful, a severe critic, and somewhat cynical. He published several very able sermons, and not unfrequently preached for me, and with considerable acceptance, to the more reflecting among the people. He and his interesting family left the neighbourhood many years ago. He had a son who had been a student at Cheshunt College, and had taken his B. A. What has become of him I know not. Should he be living and peruse these lines, let him accept the assurance of my pleasing reminiscences of his excellent parents (who I presume are gone), and my best wishes for himself.

There was *Rev. Dr. Bell*, late of Lancaster. He, too, for some years was a settled member of the congregation. He was a tall, stout, ruddy-faced man, imposing, but by no means prepossessing. We never took to each other; and, in fact, there was a kind of mutual repulsion. Whenever I saw him the centrifugal force was strong on me, but we never quarreled. Though he heard me very regularly for some years, I never craved the opportunity of hearing him, either in public or private.

There was *Rev. Mr. Joseph*, who had been a missionary for some years in Tahaite, who came to reside in the neighbourhood. He was from Carmarthenshire, and had been a student in the Presbyterian College of his county town. He was thin and delicate, thoughtful, intelligent, and devout. On leaving Stockwell, he settled at Arundel, Sussex, where, after a few years, he died



of a terrible disease. Of him I have nothing but pleasing memories.

There was *Rev. Mr. Howe*, who also had been a missionary in Tahaité. He was a comely, competent man, a thinker, and a scholar, and had translated the Scriptures into the Tahaitan language. He left Stockwell to return to his old missionary sphere, and has been dead for many years.

There was *Rev. Ingram Cobbin*, the famous author of the *Condensed Commentary*. He used to walk all the way from Camberwell (some three miles), though an old man, to hear me on Sunday mornings. In person he was perhaps below the average standard in height and bulk. His brow was neither broad nor lofty, his eyes were not large, but remarkably keen and penetrating, and his countenance expressed the shrewd and the comic; in fact, he beamed with humour. He could say cutting things that would kindle indignation, and witty things that would evoke laughter. The portrait in the frontispiece of the *Condensed Commentary* is lifelike. He was exceedingly kind and friendly to me, constantly pressing me to visit him at his house and join him at his domestic board. Not long before his death when I paid him my final visit, I observed over his bedroom door a stuffed dog in a glass case. I was struck with the object, and made some remark about its beauty, whereupon he said, "I fully hope to meet that dog in the future world." I looked upon him, thinking he was in fun, and said, "You don't mean that." "Yes, indeed I do," he said, and gave me a tract on the immortality of dogs which he had written, and which I regret to say I have lost. Was he right? Perhaps so. Anyhow, I believe in the immortality, the inextinguishableness of *life*. But whether all, or any, of the various *forms* which life assumes on this mundane sphere, will live for ever, I know not; indeed, I rather question this.

There were other ministers who also were about the same time members of my congregation, some of whom I cannot, at this moment, recall, and others that scarcely deserve note. But these I well remember and for most of them had unquenchable regard. Their names are melodious to my ear, their forms charming to the imagination, and their lives fragrant to the heart. "These all died," I believe, "in faith," and are at home, and to that home—wherever it is—they have lent attractions for me that grow with years.

# *The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.*

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## SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

### **The Candle and the Scratched Mirror.—Egoism.**

YOUR pier glass or extensive surface of polished steel, made to be rubbed by a housemaid, will be minutely and multitudinously scratched in all directions; but place now against it a lighted candle as a centre of illumination, and lo! the scratches will seem to arrange themselves in a fine series of concentric circles round that little sun. It is demonstrable

that the scratches are going everywhere impartially, and it is only your candle which produces the flattering illusion of a concentric arrangement, its light falling with an exclusive optical selection. These things are a parable. The scratches are events, and the candle is the egoism of the person.

GEORGE ELIOT.

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### **Science—The Evidence of Facts, and of Design.**

God alone is and can be the first cause of this universe, the Mover of its motion, the Giver of its life. The wise purposes which shine forth for us in nature were in the mind of God from the first act of creation. In saying that He has wrought by laws, we do not detract from His power. We seem rather to enhance it to our minds in attributing to Him constancy as well as wisdom. A law is not a restraint, it is a fixed manner of working.

To say of a painter that he never produces any but fine works, does not affirm that he is less free than an inferior artist, just because producing bad works is no power or privilege, but a defect. And so, when we admit that God works by laws, and expect to find the same spectrum from the sun's rays which we have once made with our own prism, at every time and in every place, where the sun's light shines, and so on, we do not narrow

the power of the great Artificer, unless it can be shown that caprice is a privilege and a good. The laws of nature are God's laws, and God's laws are His utterances of Himself through the speech of nature. God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and so His laws remain the same. They are, if I may say so without irreverence, the veil and vesture over the form of God, too bright in itself for us to look on; they take their outline from Him who is beneath them . . . . Until the purpose that runs through the ages is completed, the laws will stand sure. But each new kingdom of nature has introduced a change, amounting to a revolution, which neither the theologian nor the naturalist regards as an interference, or a caprice. When the principle of plant-life was introduced, the mineral world became the material on which the plant-life worked. It gathered into itself the lower elements, carbon, silica, nitrogen, and used them as means of its own organic life. The plant partook of the nature of the class below it, whilst it dominated and used that class. This same took place when animal life was introduced. The beautiful plants became the material whereon the

animal life worked, the food whereby it sustained itself. It was the same when man was added, in whom instinct is replaced by reason, and ethical action supervenes over action by impulse and appetite. Each of these kingdoms has much in common with that which is below it. The animal is in many respects a plant, for the diatomaceous creatures one knows hardly in which kingdom to find their place. The man is an animal in much, and perhaps his animal instincts play a larger part in the world's history and in his own development than we are wont to allow. But each higher step brings in something wholly new. "An animal," says Hegel, "is a miracle for the vegetable world." Each step is a revolution in one point of view, but then the lower state prepared itself for the higher, prophesied, so to speak, of its coming, and the higher seated itself so easily on the throne prepared for it that we do not wonder to find it there. You call it revolution; we call it a creative act. We think that God exists, and if He acts anywhere, it must be in this, the universe of things."

WILLIAM THOMSON, D.D.,  
*Archbishop of York.*

## Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

IN CHRISTO; OR, THE MONOGRAM OF ST. PAUL. By J. R. MACDUFF, D.D. London: J. Nisbet & Co., Berners Street.

Dr. MacDuff has written many valuable works on important subjects. The subject he has chosen for this volume transcends them all, and into it he throws the full vigour of his intellect, and the enthusiasm of his heart. To be in Christ, in His school, spirit, and character, is to be in a condition acceptable to God, approved by conscience, and destined to advance in intelligence, virtue, and blessedness for ever. To be in Christ is the *summum bonum* of human existence. No higher theme, therefore, could our author have had, and he has handled it with his usual ability; and this is saying much. He has taken up the phrase "in Christ" as used by the apostles on no less than thirty-three occasions, and on each occasion he brings some fresh light upon a soul in that blessed condition. Most heartily do we recommend this priceless volume. Though containing much profound thought and sacred learning, its language is so clear, its illustrations so apt, as to bring the theme within the comprehension of the most ordinary reader.

IN PROSPECT OF SUNDAY. By REV. G. S. BOWES, B.A. London: James Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street.

The following extract from the author's preface will put the reader in possession of the nature and object of this volume:—"It is now twenty years since I was led to compile 'Illustrative Gatherings,' and the general acceptance with which it was received in England and America encouraged me to issue a second series of Illustrations, with the same title, and prepare a companion volume of Illustrations, gathered entirely from Scripture. It has often occurred to me that another work would be useful; a collection, not of illustrations, but of arguments, references, cases of conscience, and some of the usual requisites for Christian teaching. 'Illustrations,' it has been said, 'are like the windows of a church;

arguments are like the pillars;’ both are necessary; both have their proper place and value. I now, therefore, offer to the Church a small compendium, which I have been preparing for the last few years, and which I believe will supply a want. It is the result of much earnest toil and labour, of much reading, and the gathered thoughts of many valued friends. The design is to provide ready and suggestive help for those engaged in preparation for the pulpit, in conducting Bible classes, cottage lectures, &c.; by presenting a birdseye view of the salient points of many important subjects, in the hope of elucidating and unfolding Christian truth.” This volume will be a great help in preparing suitable discourses. As such we recommend it.

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ISAAC, JACOB, AND JOSEPH. By MARCUS DODS, D.D. Edinburgh: Macniven & Wallace.

The subjects treated of in this book are Ishmael and Jacob—Isaac’s Marriage—Esau and Jacob—Jacob’s fraud—Jacob’s flight and dream—Jacob at Peniel—Jacob’s return—Joseph’s dreams—Joseph in prison—Pharaoh’s dreams—Joseph’s administration—Visits of Joseph’s brethren—The reconciliation. The able author not only throws a great deal of light upon these subjects, but offers reflections that are most wise, suggestive, and practical. The style is singularly clear and cogent. The only fault we have with the book is that it seems to overrate both Jacob and Joseph. They appear in the author’s pages a little better, we think, than in the sacred chronicles.

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NOTES ON GENESIS. By REV. NATHANIEL KEYMER, M.A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke.

This little book is written by a man of ability and scholarship, and evidently with a good design; but we question very much the propriety and usefulness of proceeding as the author has done, upon the advice of the Bishop of Lincoln in his preliminary notice, who says: “In that they who hold the faith may gain the victory by a successful defence of God’s Holy Word, they must learn, and teach others, to see Christ, the eternal word, speaking in the Old Testament concerning Himself, as afterwards fully revealed in the New Testament.” It is true that a man sees in any subject what he brings to it, but really there is no more of Christ in much of the “Old Testament,” than in Cæsar’s Commentaries, or Smollett’s History. We injure any piece of



literature or history, by trying to make it do a work for which it was never intended, and the Christ that a man often gets out of the Old Testament writings is not a character to inspire the highest admiration and confidence. Christ to be found must be sought in the Gospels.

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THE DIVINE FORECAST. By REV. EDWARD HUNTINGFORD. London: Bickers & Son.

The author says in his preface that he does not in these pages pretend to have made any new discovery in the fulfilment of Christian prophecy, or to have suggested any novel principles for our guidance in questions of Church and State during these critical times, but he has endeavoured to place well-known truths in a concise form, and in a form of evidence, before the mind of the general reader, with the inferences which may naturally be drawn from them. Those who are interested in endeavouring to find out in the mystical books of Daniel and the Apocalypse the character and doom of Papacy, may find interest in the pages of this little volume.

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#### BOOKS ON OUR TABLE FOR NOTICE.

"Leisure Hour" for 1880. "Sunday at Home" for 1880. "Critical Handbook," by Dr. Mitchell. "What do I believe?" By Dr. Green. "The Last First." "Vignettes of the Great Revival." "Pocket Books for 1881;" The Religious Tract Society, London. "System of Christian Doctrine," Vols. I. and II. Clark, Edinburgh. "The Fireside" for 1880. "What Church?" "Popular Recreation," by Dr. Bullock; "Hand and Heart," Office, Paternoster Buildings. "Far Out," by Lieut.-Col. Butler. Isbister and Co. "The Incarnation of God," by H. Batchelor; "The Prophet Jonah," by G. Burn. "The Minister's Diary;" Hodder and Stoughton. "Savonarola;" Partridge and Co. "Gems of Great Authors," by J. Tillotson; Gall and Ingliss. "The Future of Palestine," by B. Walker; Nisbet and Co. "Appendix to Dr. Young's Concordance;" Young and Co., Edinburgh. "The Land and the Book;" Nisbet. "The Family Prayer and Sermon Book;" Strahan and Co. "Golden Childhood;" Ward, Lock and Co. "Duty," by S. Smiles; Murray and Co. "Memorials of Dr. Candlish;" A. and C. Black. "Heroes of the Cross;" Davenport Adams. "Suggestive Thoughts on Religious Subjects;" Griffin and Co.



## *Leading Homily.*

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THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD OF 1880.

“ALL GO TO ONE PLACE.” *Eccles. iii. 20.*

**T**HUS muses the writer of the most melancholy book in the Bible, whoever he may have been, and wherever he lived. Ever and again his cadences are hopeful, but their prevailing tone is sad; the sentences sometimes gleam with more light, but they are mostly wrapped in gloom. No wonder; for whether his words, “*vanitas vanitatum*,” are the yawn of the sated voluptuary, or the groan of the self-seeking misanthrope, either sensuality or selfishness is enough to fill a man with miserable views of life, whether his own or other people’s. However, in the midst of his melancholy musings, he utters much truth. And this is to be expected. For, while only the perfectly pure and holy soul of Jesus could know and teach all human beatitudes, only a nature rich yet ruined, great yet grovelling, could pour forth the full wail of human misery.

Our text contains the reflection that in the destiny of physical mortality man and the lower animals are one. "Both perish under the same power of death, suffer the same pangs of dissolution. The bodies of both spring from the same dust, and moulder back to dust." This is true not only of beasts, in common with men who are poor, mean, obscure ; but in common with men who are wealthy, exalted, famous. It is true of the beasts of the field, in common with the illustrious dead. It is enough for our present subject to remember that these sombre words include all men. The grave is the goal of all ; "All go to one place."

I. "All go" with PHYSICAL UNIFORMITY. The pilgrimage of men is a procession to their graves.

1. "All go" *constantly*. There is no turning back, not even a pause. In childhood as in old age, asleep as awake, we all are going the way whence we shall no more return. The vigorous step of the athletic young cricketer of twenty-nine, and the tottering footfall of the aged diplomatist of ninety-two are alike a funeral march.

2. "All go" *irresistibly*. Nature has a claim to the dust of which we are composed, and she will not be defrauded. Her bills must be paid. The cycle our bodily organisation runs cannot be broken. All the environments that can surround the throne of an empress of all the Russians are unavailing to perpetuate bodily life.

3. "All go" *irrevocably*. The grave is the "bourne from which no traveller returns ;" the journey to it is a path that no steps ever retrace ; all the footprints in that path are turned in one direction. The reader must say about the favourite author, the congregation

about the gifted minister, the ducal husband about the almost queenly wife, "They shall not come back to me, but I shall go to them."

II. "All go" with SPIRITUAL DISSIMILARITY. Whatever the mournful monotony in the mortality of men, there is profuse variety in their character and their influence.

1. There is a great difference in their *mental character*. Some go into the eternal world with rich endowments of vast knowledge, like the distinguished novelist over whose grave the earth lies fresh to-day; and some go with no culture, no information, and scarcely a glimmer of intelligence, like the vulgar among the rich, or the lazy among the poor.

2. There is great difference in their *moral character*. Indeed, one of the tests of moral character may be the spirit with which they go to the grave, and to the great unseen hereafter.

Some go with *stolid indifference*. Either foolish and frivolous, or callous and insensate, they go on and on, never inquiring, even when one foot is in the grave, "Whither am I going?" Over such, the pitiful words of a loving God seem to fall like the tears of Jesus, "Oh, that men were wise, that they would consider their latter end."

Some go with *terrified reluctance*. Through fear of death they are all their lifetime "subject to bondage," and the fetters that fear forges enthrall the man, and eat into him more horribly than any iron chain. Death is the spectre that haunts their thoughtful hours, the skull that mocks their festivals.

Some go with *calm acquiescence*. Because they find in physical death but the workings of the laws of

a God, who, as long as He is God, must be good, they say about death as Galileo said of his lost sight, "It has pleased God it should be so, and it must please us also."

Some go with *triumphant rapture*. To them the invisible is so real; to them the sainted dead have such a charm; to them the prospect of deliverance from sin is so attractive, to them the risen Christ is such a spell, that, with hearts that long to be free from this world of winterliness and wickedness, and to rejoice in the summerland of immortality, they exult with Paul, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

3. There is great difference in their *spiritual influence*. Some, like the babe that is borne from its mother's arms to burial, go with no character, and therefore no influence. Some, like the drunkard and the liar, the unchaste and the selfish, go with a bad character and a bad influence. And some, like the virtuous, the useful, the self-denying, go with a beautiful character and a beneficent influence. So, "being dead, they yet speak."

The truth we have been thus considering gives a terrible significance to the names another year has added to the long death roll of our race. We may mention a few out of the millions to be found in the catacombs of the dead year; but only the prominent few who to men seemed to be illustrious—always remembering that, while the record may contain some that the angels, that the hand of God would strike off the list of the great and good, it omits even more who in the heaven of true fame will "shine as the stars for ever and ever."



Glancing first into *Legal Circles*, for there the havoc has been great, whom do we miss? Who have "gone over to the majority?"

There is *Sergeant Cox*, a fair lawyer, a just yet clement magistrate, but more distinguished for his psychological research, and his varied and successful literary ventures.

*Sergeant Parry*, whose stately mien, and massive and ornate eloquence as a pleader, made him for a long series of years one of the ornaments of the English Bar.

*Dr. Kenealy*, who, by the consent even of his adversaries, had endowments of genius and of learning superior to most of his compeers; who had, too, to the extreme, the courage of his convictions—convictions that made him not only the advocate of an unpopular cause, but the founder of a party that survives him. Less irascible and less egotistic, he could, so his contemporaries at the Bar aver, have achieved the highest professional success of our time.

*Lord Chief Justice Cockburn* was the judicial idol of fashionable society, but he was somewhat more. He was comparatively so free from prejudices or from temptations to them, excepting on the side of fashion, that he was a juster judge than many who profess a Christianity, to which he made no pretence whatever. His eloquence both at the Bar and on the Bench, was spirited, copious, and luminous. If it seemed to critics to lack precision of phrase and exactness of conception, it was nevertheless attractive and impressive, and the vehicle through which the genius of civil and religious liberty often found emphatic utterance.

In *Chief Justice Erle* English Law lost one of its most accurate, and perspicuous, and just exponents.

Passionless and fair in the courts, he was endeared in private life by all the qualities that mark the true English gentleman.

*Baron Kelly* is said to have been as painstaking a judge as ever sat on the Bench. So painstaking that he was prolix. Though indulging in something very like a political manifesto, whenever a new Lord Mayor was presented to the Court of Exchequer, he (and this we may proudly say of most of our modern judges,) was utterly free from party bias in all his judicial decisions.

*Lord Justice Thesiger*, the youngest of our judges, owed his early advance to the Bench to family influence, for he was the son of one Chancellor and the protégé of another. But if he had had no family influence he would have been worthily placed where he was. Unassuming, plodding, and of a most judicial temper of mind, even envy could not find fault with his elevation. Moreover, in happy contrast to some who have been great judges, but worthless men, he seems in every relation of life to have been very complete. In him the names of son, husband, brother, friend, glow with their true lustre.

Looking into the domain of *Statesmanship* we find that none of the first rank, either in England or on the Continent have passed away. True, France lost *Jules Fèvre* at a great old age, when for more than half a century he had been, by his boldness and eloquence, one of the lights of Radicalism, through the oft-repeated revolutions of that great country. And Italy lost *Baron Ricasoli*, whose name as a true patriot will recall the exciting scenes of those stirring times through which his nation passed to consolidation and to freedom.

Among those whom our English Parliament has lost,

we must not forget the name of our almost neighbour, *Sir Stephen Cave*, who was a rightly honoured member of the last Conservative Government, and alike distinguished as an apt financier, and esteemed as a just man.

*Lord Hampton*, too, better known as Sir John Pakington, at a great old age, has gone. A conscientious Conservative, a diligent public servant, he figured largely in State affairs, without, however, obtaining much distinction. He is, nevertheless, to be honoured because of his interest in elementary education, and his endeavour five and twenty years ago to create Education Boards in every town and every country Union. Though he failed to carry his measure, he introduced it into the House of Commons in a speech of deep earnestness and of extensive knowledge, which was doubtless an impetus to the subsequent action of Parliament.

*Royal Houses* have not endured such severe bereavements as in some recent years. But we do not forget that the saddened life of *Marie Alexandrovna*, the *Empress of Russia*, came to its end in almost as much gloom as could gather round any death bed, on June 3rd, when she was but 55 years old.

The *Duchess of Westminster* was a sort of queen of English society. For in her, aristocracy of character adorned aristocracy of rank, and led her by sweet sympathies that overflowed the barriers of caste and of custom to bless the wide and lofty circle in which she moved; and by a gentle yet genuine public spirit to be as one of the angels of progress and of philanthropy.

In the *Mercantile* world we scarcely note the loss of those who have been merely rich. That is a very vulgar distinction. But we miss and mourn those who

were munificent, such as *Mark Firth*, the lavish benefactor of the town of Sheffield, or *Sir Francis Lycett*, the liberal contributor to Wesleyan enterprises. When liberality like Mark Firth's is unsectarian it is nobler and more influential than when it runs in the channels of any sect or party. Yet both these great givers blessed with their benefactions thousands of mankind, and so were rich towards God.

In the realm of *Music*, the musical will miss the popular composer in *Offenbach*, a distinguished organist in *Sir John Goss*, a superb singer in *Adelaide Neillson*, and a renowned teacher in *John Curwen*. Blessed is the destiny of the musician, who at death goes—

“To join the choir invisible,  
Whose music is the gladness of the world.”

In the world of *Letters* the losses, if few, have been severe.

There was *Tom Taylor*, whose brave and bright spirit won for him such honoured friendships as those of Charles Kingsley and Tom Hughes. He was dramatist, or rather playwright, and art critic, but best known as editor of “Punch.” Judging hastily, some might conclude that in this last capacity his chief mission was to minister to the risible faculties of men, and simply to please such of England as is laughter loving. But in reality he was the caricaturist of the hollow shams of society, and the abuses of public life. With him (and this is very largely true of those among whom he sat as literary king), humour was the servant of honesty, of peace, and of humanity.

*Frank Buckland*, who died but the other day, and who called himself “Fisherman and Zoologist,” did

good service to our time as a sympathetic and devoted naturalist. By his multiform labours in fishery commissions, in writing volumes, and in newspaper contributions he threw a light on animal life that may well make men more thoughtful, more kind, more devout. He was free from the selfishness that withholds knowledge from others ; indeed, he had a perfect passion for communicating what from time to time he came to know. A pure passion his, which shames those who, whether in science or religion, seem to know much but teach little.

But, without doubt, the greatest loss which literature sustained in the year was the last. For when, in December, after but three days' illness, "*George Eliot*" ended her career, England lost the greatest prose authoress she has ever known. The gathering at her grave of the leaders of science and philosophy, and poetry and art, was their tribute to one whom they deemed distinguished for her "breadth of culture, and universality of power." Her mastery of languages, living and dead, her grasp of philosophies, ancient and new, her knowledge of human life in all its phases, yielded magnificent supplies to her vigorous genius. Her works, so familiar that I need not name them, show a Shakesperian understanding of human nature, and a subtle interpretation of human life. In them there is the research of the scholar, the vividness of the painter, the scorn of the satirist, the humour of the wit, the intuition of the woman, and the strength of the man. Had the religion of Jesus been to her intellect and heart and life all that it was to Eliazbeth Barrett Browning, her works would have been of untold worth in Christianising the world. As it is, through her atti-



tude to religion, a melancholy hue and tone pervade her writings; they are lacking in true spring of elasticity and hope, because of her scepticism. With a richer and a happier faith she would have had scarcely any limit to her own power, or to the influence for good she wields.

The *Pulpit* suffered serious losses last year. For though, perhaps, no preacher of the first rank was hushed by the resistless angel of silence, some who are gone will be long missed.

*Canon Miller*, distinguished by his position as a leader of the evangelical party in the Established Church, and by his zeal as a diligent parish clergyman in the teeming populations of Birmingham and Greenwich, may be regarded as one of the founders of the Hospital Sunday in London, and is conspicuous as an earnest and courageous liberal politician.

The *Rev. John Rodgers*, the vicar of St. Thomas, Charterhouse, who, besides his care of parochial duty, devoted himself with rare ability and enthusiasm to the work of the School Board in London, has left behind him in every sphere of his activity, the reputation of being every inch a man.

*Canon Oakeley*, who joined the Church of Rome with Dr., now Cardinal, Newman, was first of all as a clergyman in the English Church, and afterwards in the Roman, fervent, high minded, and consecrated.

*Rev. Samuel Coley* honoured amongst the great Wesleyan community as an interesting preacher, an industrious theological tutor, and a good man.

The *Rev. Charles Birrell*, through a long and useful ministry, was greatly beloved far beyond the Baptist denomination to which he belonged.

The *Rev. Josiah Miller*.—A congregational minister of fine reputation; was the author of a volume treating religion as Bacon does philosophy.

*Dr. Alexander Raleigh*, whose great pulpit influence was as impressive and Catholic, and altogether healthy, as his painstaking laboriousness and his gifted and devout spirit could make it, preached at the opening of this church, and now, after twenty years, we may well recall the words of his text in connection with our subject to-night, "I have the keys of death and of hell."

The preacher says, "All go to one place." All these have gone to one place as to their bodies—gone to their kindred dust, gone to their mother earth. As to their minds, their souls, their real selves, it may be, shall I say it must be, they are gone to different realms. Body may blend with body, but souls never. They are for ever apart. Each a world in itself—each, indeed, having an orbit of experience which no other can ever travel. There is a Divine voice, that, echoing down the centuries, says to you, and me, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;" and then again; "Go thou thy way until the end be, and thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

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### Life.

Life is a chariot whose wheel never stops till it dashes over the precipice and is destroyed. It is a vessel that never anchors, a flower, a vapour, a shadow.

Like the snowfall in the river,  
A moment white—then melts for ever;  
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,  
Evanishing amid the storm.

*Problemata Mundi.*

# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLIV.

### A Threefold Moral State of Mind.

“O GOD MY HEART IS FIXED,” ETC.—*Psalm cviii.* 1-13.

**HOMILETICS** :—This psalm is not an original composition, it is a compilation of a portion of two other Psalms, viz., Ps. lvii. 7-11, and Ps. lx. 5-12.\* As each of these portions have already engaged our attention it would be superfluous to dwell upon them here. Who the compiler of this Psalm is, or why the compilation was made, are questions which cannot be determined with

\* See *Homilist*, vol. xxxviii, page 327, and vol. xxxix., page 99.

any certitude. "It is not likely," says Dr. Cooke, "that David united two incongruous parts of his own composition. The variations generally of phrase between this Psalm and the Psalms from which it is composed are unimportant. Psalms lvii. and lx. are both Elohistic, in verse 3 of this Psalm Jehovah is substituted for Adonai." It is noteworthy that both of the Psalms (lvii. and lx.) of which this poem is made up were composed under most trying circumstances. Psalm lvii. when David was in the cave of Adullam, and Psalm lx. when he was suffering great reverses in the war with the Assyrians and Ammonites. The Psalm points to a threefold state of mind.

I. MORAL FIXATION OF SOUL. "*O God my heart is fixed.*" This concentration of soul is unknown to unregenerate men. They are unsettled, divided, distracted, and therefore more or less unhappy. Men are not only divided amongst themselves, but divided *within* themselves. The social collision of mind with mind which is constantly disturbing communities, and convulsing empires, is in truth but the effect and the emblem of the conflict of the soul with itself. The quarrels and wars without are but the visible signs and audible echoes of the inward controversies and battlings of man with himself. Principles and passions, conscience and interests, the aspiration of the spirit and the instincts of the flesh, between these the human soul is riven to its centre. The verses point to two of the grand results of this moral fixedness. First: The highest happiness. "*I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. Awake psaltery and harp,*" &c. All this is the language of exultation, and this exultation springs from a true decision of soul, self unity, and con-

cord.\* Another result of this moral fixedness is : Secondly:—The heartiest worship. “*I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people, and I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations,*” &c. Highest worship must ever spring from true fixation of soul for this reason;—the most glorious Being in the universe is its centre. The thoughts and affections being fixed on Him who is transcendently good, beautiful, and true, worship follows as a matter of course. The Being whom we exalt in our hearts as the Supreme One we would have the universe to exalt, and we exclaim, “*Be Thou exalted above the heavens : and Thy glory above all the earth.*” “Who is a God like our Lord, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” &c. The Psalm points to another state of mind—

II. THE INFLATION OF WORLDLY SUCCESS. “*God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem and mete out the Valley of Succoth, Gilead is mine,*” &c. The Psalm (lx.) from which these verses are taken is a war song in anticipation of victory. The warrior is flushed by the prospect of triumph over his enemies, and looks down upon them with a heartless contempt. What is Gilead—that mountainous district between Bashan and Moab? It is “*mine.*” Manasseh, too, is “*mine.*” As to Ephraim “*I will make it the strength of mine head.*” “*Judah is my law giver, Moab is my wash pot*”—The mere vessel in which I wash my feet. “*Over Edom will I cast out my shoe.*” “The writer,” says Dr. Cooke, “regards Edom only as a vessel for the meanest uses. He casts to it the shoe which he takes off in order to wash his feet.”

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\* See my “Philosophy of Happiness,” page 97.



The tendency of worldly success is to make men supercilious and heartless; men who have won great success in any department of life, be it in war, commerce, or learning, have ever been disposed to look down with contempt on those not so distinguished. This haughtiness of some is not only the most vile but the most pernicious state of mind. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

"I charge thee fling away ambition,  
By that sin fell the angels, how can man then,  
The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?  
Love thyself last, cherish those hearts that hate thee,  
Corruption wins not more than honesty.  
Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace  
To silence envious tongues. Be just, fear not—  
Let all the ends thou aimest at be thy country's,  
Thy God's, and truth's."

The Psalm points to another state of mind—

III.—CONSCIOUSNESS OF UTTER DEPENDENCE. "*Who will bring me into the strong city?*" "This is the common Hebrew idiom," says Dr. Cooke, "to express an earnest longing or confident hope equivalent to, 'O that He would lead me.' '*Wilt not thou, O God?*' I cannot do it myself, and no one but Thou canst do it. '*Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man.*'" All this breathes a spirit of dependence upon God. This state of mind,—viz., a conscious dependence on God is *right*, for there is no creature more dependent than man,—lies at the foundation of our personal religion for without it there is no looking to God, no prayer, no thanksgiving. In truth, all religion grows out of this sense of dependence.

CONCLUSION.—Do these three states of mind represent three different persons, or are they states of mind of one man? There is no argument to show that this psalm is not the product of three different minds, the religiously sound, the haughtily defiant, and the consciously dependent. But it is not at all impossible for one man to be the possessor of these three states with more or less force, and at different times. In this world of temptation the best of men have remaining within them some tendencies to evil, and hence even the most settled in soul may waver at times, the most humble may be touched with the inspiration of pride, and the proudest sometimes be overwhelmed with the consciousness of dependence. “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” “Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe.” “Unite my heart to fear Thy name.”

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### Sermonettes.

#### GENUINE PRAYER.

“I cried with my whole heart,” &c.—Ps. cxix. 145-149.

I. THE spirit of genuine prayer. (1) It is *earnest* and concentrated. “I cried with my whole heart.” There is no true prayer in which the whole soul is not vehement. (2) It is earnest and constant. “I prevented the dawning, I was beforehand in the twilight.”

II. The *purpose* of genuine prayer. (1) Obedience: “I will keep Thy statutes.” The object of all genuine prayer should be conformity to the Divine will. (2) Meditation: “That I might meditate in Thy word.” This meditation will delight the soul and stimulate obedience. (3) Quickening: “Quicken me according to Thy judgment.” Spiritual vitilisation.

III. The *ground* of genuine prayer. “According to Thy loving-kindness.” Thy lovingkindness as seen in nature, in Providence, and *above* all, in Christ.

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

No. CXIX.

### The Divine Spirit in Relation to the Redemptive Dispensation.

"AND WHEN HE IS COME, HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN,"  
&c., John xvi. 8-15.

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 8.—"*And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*" Convict the human world, the unregenerated race, mankind. "This conviction of the world is by witness concerning Christ (chap. xv. 26). It is the revelation to the hearts of men of the character and work of Christ, and therefore a refutation of the evil in their hearts. The result of this conviction is twofold, according as men embrace it, accept its chastening discipline, and are saved by it: or reject it, and in the rejection harden their hearts,

and are thus condemned by it. (Comp. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) The effect of St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost is the first great historical comment on this verse, but the comment is continued in the whole history of the Church's work. The last part of the verse enumerates the three steps in this conviction, which are more fully defined in the three following verses." "*Righteousness.*" Ideal righteousness, righteousness as embodied and exemplified in the character of Christ. Righteousness the antithesis of sin. "*Of judgment.*" Retribution. Con-

vince them that both from sin and righteousness retributive results will spring.

Ver. 9. "*Of sin because they believe not on Me.*" Unbelief in Christ is in itself a sin, and is the prolific source of sin.

Ver. 10. "*Of righteousness because I go to my Father.*"

When I am gone to my Father the Spirit will convince you of my righteousness. "The special reason of the conviction of righteousness is the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. Man called Him a sinner (chap. ix. 24), and His crucifixion was the world's assertion that He was a malefactor (chap. xviii. 30), and even when He was hanging upon the cross, there came to the centurion's mind the conviction, "Truly, this Man was innocent," and His return to the Father was heaven's witness to His righteousness. For the way in which this conviction was brought home to the hearts of the apostles, and through them to the hearts of mankind, Comp. especially Acts ii. 27, 31, 36. Also Acts iii. 14; vii. 52; 1 Peter iii. 18; 1 John ii. 1-29; iii. 7."

Ver. 11. "*Of judgment because the prince of this world is*

*judged.*" "The prince of this world," the old serpent, the devil, the prince of the power of the air. The completion of Christ's work on the earth, His triumph over death, His ascension to heaven effected a terrible retribution on Satan, and his retribution proves a retribution upon all his adherents." The sin of the world, the rectitude of Christ, the judgment or retribution following the wrong, are the great subjects on which the divine Spirit was to carry a profound conviction into the souls of men.

Ver. 12. "*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*" (See chap. xv-15). Christ reveals to men just so much as they have the capacity for receiving, and no more. Let the capacity expand, and more light will come.

Ver. 13. "*Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth.*" This means probably the truth. All the truth, essential to the spiritual restoration of mankind. "*For He shall speak not of Himself.*" "The meaning is not He shall not speak concerning Himself, but He shall not speak

from Himself, in the sense immediately to be added."

Ver. 14. "*He shall glorify me.*"

"The pronoun is here full of emphasis. The thought is that the future guidance of the Spirit promised in verse 13 will be the revelation of the many things of Christ Himself which they cannot hear now" (verse 12). "*For He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.*" Better as in ver. 13, announcing it unto you. This is the test of the Spirit, "Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every Spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God." The revelation of Christ is not an imperfect revelation which the Holy Spirit is to supplement. It is a free revelation imperfectly received, and His office is to

illuminate the heart and bring home to it the things of Christ."

Ver. 15. "*All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you.*" These words I think do not express the relation of the Son to the Father, but the amazing plenitudes of truth which the Father had communicated to Him. "*All things*" refers, I am disposed to think, to the things connected with Christ's mission, character, purposes, and deeds, His whole history, and this the Spirit was to present to the world when He was gone. Reproduce not merely the revelations that He had made to them, but unfold revelations that He had yet to make. (See Watkins, Lange, Godet, &c.)

HOMILETICS :—These verses bring under our notice the *Divine Spirit in relation to the redemptive dispensation.*

Observe :

I. HIS ADVENT into the world in connection with this dispensation. This Divine agent here called "Comforter" or Advocate, the "*Spirit of truth*" had always been in the world. He had been working in its *material* department. He brought this bright and lovely world out of chaos. He spread out the heavens, poured out the oceans, and piled up the hills. He had



been working in its *mental* department, teaching men how to build houses, cultivate lands, and establish order, live holy and noble lives. He strove with the antedeluvians, He worked in bad men, in Balaam, Cyrus, Saul, &c., stimulated them to good actions. He inspired patriarchs and prophets to noble deeds and sublime utterances, but *now* in connection with this redemptive dispensation He comes because Christ had finished His work, left the earth, and ascended to heaven. He came to work upon humanity through the biography of Christ, to press that biography in all its sublimest significance and quickening forces on the souls of men. The Gospel was a new organ through which this Divine agent was to work in the world. He came on the day of Pentecost through this gospel and worked wonders, and has been working in the world ever since: so that the Gospel comes to the world now not in word only but with much assurance, and with the power of the Holy Ghost.

Observe:

II. His MINISTRY in the world in connection with this dispensation. First: His ministry is that of moral conviction. "*To convince the world of sin.*" Though the world is well acquainted with sin, for its hideous form and terrible results are everywhere, it has no deep conviction of it, and a conviction of its terrible enormity is the first step to its abandonment, the first impetus to an effective struggle for the true, the beautiful, and the good. "*Of righteousness.*" Christ's righteousness. The righteousness which rung in His every word, shone in His every look, beamed and bounded in every act of His life, was the righteousness of which the world required the deepest and strongest conviction. It

required this in order to see the ghastly heinousness of sin, and the grand ideal which it should endeavour with intense earnestness and perseverance to attain. "*Of judgment*"—retribution. The world required a conviction of this, that men have not done with deeds as they perform them, but that those deeds by an eternal law bring after them momentous consequences. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Such are the convictions which the Divine Spirit through the Gospel has to burn into the souls of living men. Secondly: His ministry is that of spiritual guidance. "*He will guide you unto all truth.*" The world lives in the realm of shadows, dreams, fictions, unrealities, it walks in a vain show. The work of the Spirit is to take it into the universe of eternal realities, and especially to bring out those vital truths which Christ had to communicate, but which His disciples at present were incapable of receiving. "*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them yet.*" An expression this which indicates (1) That Christ's disciples are not ignorant for lack of knowledge in their Teacher. He "*has many things to say.*" Ah, how many! A universe to communicate. (2) That Christ's disciples are ignorant because of their incapacity to receive. "*Ye cannot bear them yet.*" A man's capacity to receive knowledge depends upon his attainments, the lower those the less capable; the higher, the more. Hence the duty to study. The deeper the cavity in the earth the more water the clouds can pour into it.

Thirdly. His ministry is that of Christ—glorifying. "*He shall glorify Me.*" How will He glorify Christ? Here is the answer. "*He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.*" To reveal Christ is to glorify Him,

to take of the things of an inglorious and a degraded being, would be to bring him into contempt. But to take of the things of a Being who is Himself glorious and reveal them is to glorify Him. The sun is glorified by the rays that it pours out on the rolling orbs that reflect its brightness, and Christ is glorified by having Himself revealed.

CONCLUSION.—Such, then, is the advent and mission of this divine agent. Has this divine agent come to us through the Gospel, producing convictions, guiding into all the truth, and glorifying Christ, revealing Him to our inmost souls? \* Has He given permanent impressions of Christ's glory to us? We are told that the inventor of photography found at first a great difficulty in fixing his sun pictures. The solar beams came and gave the image, but when the tablet was drawn from the camera the image had vanished. What he wanted was, that which has since been obtained—a fixing solution to arrest and retain the fugitive impressions. This is what we want with the impressions that Divine truth makes upon the soul, and this is the work of the Spirit. He forms Christ in the heart, the Hope of Glory.

Flow down, Thou stream of Life Divine,  
Thy quick'ning truths deliver,  
Oh, flow throughout the soul of mine  
For ever and for ever.

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\* Among the best authors to be consulted on this subject we would mention Archdeacon Hare in his "*Mission of the Comforter*," also *Rev. H. W. Watkins, M.A.*, Professor of Theology at King's College, London, in his commentary on the Gospel of John, edited by Dr. Ellicott. Also *F. D. Maurice* in loco.


# *Sermonic Saplings.*

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## OUTLINES ON GIDEON.

### VI.—The Man at His Worst.

“AND JERUBBAAL THE SON OF JOASH WENT AND DWELT IN HIS OWN HOUSE.” *Judges viii. 29 and 35.*

AN is a strange mixture of greatness and of littleness, of goodness and of badness. The one lies very close to the other. Sometimes when the animal triumphs over a man, he is disposed to say he has no goodness. But look to ourselves. What depravity we have to mourn, and yet we feel in ourselves the stirrings of a noble life. Candid self-examination is the way to beget charity towards others. We have seen Gideon in his greatness, let us now consider him in his littleness.

I. Gideon at his worst *morally*. Biblical saints are not made more than human. Their virtues are described that we may imitate them. Their vices depicted that we may avoid. There are advantages in reading biographies other than those in the Bible, but also disadvantages. Sometimes they depress. The characters too perfect, inhumanly perfect. You ask for some sign that they belonged to the great brotherhood of humanity. But every true soul studying the lives of Bible great ones must feel, here is something to make me a greater and a nobler man. Gideon not without his failings, many wives, and even concubines. Remember the degenerate times in which

he lived. No man altogether superior to the influences of his age, Gideon not. His guilt not so great as if he had lived in our days. Polygamy now almost an impossible crime. Be thankful for what the gospel has done for modern society. In those days, too, a man became a ruler, and was permitted to do things not allowed to the private individual. Great positions have always great moral dangers. Search is made for the sweet lily of the valley far in the sheltered glen of the forest. The sweet lily of a pure character may more easily show its whiteness and develop its beauty in the shade of obscure positions. In lonely walks of life there is favourable opportunity for the growth of the white flower of a blameless character. Zeal for the Lord of hosts may go along with imperfection. Zeal will not condone for the imperfection. Good works will not atone for bad works. Christ must save. If thus saved God will bless. God does not reject the honest efforts of imperfect workers.

II. Gideon at his worst *physically*. Gideon lived to a good old age; still he died, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash. He who overcame vast multitudes, is now overcome of death. Mighty Gideon lies powerless in the sepulchre of Joash. As we look at the grave we may say that the small and the great are there. Every warrior meets in a conflict where there is no chance of victory. The path of glory leads to the tomb. Israel's judges fallen. Samson not strong enough to conquer death. Israel's kings punished. Solomon not wise enough to cozen death. None slow to take home the solemn truth that physical prowess and earthly greatness cannot deliver from death's power. Preachers may preach, Jesuit orators startle by the



sight of the ghastly skull, and yet men and women live as if there were no death, and no great beyond. Thousands passing away daily, and yet the living regard not the common fate. Oh, that men would consider their latter end! To live in view of death, is not to die the sooner, is not to live less nobly or usefully.

III. Gideon at his worst *influentially*. Not always true that the good which a man does is buried along with his bones. A good man's influence must abide more or less. A man's greatness shows that he can project an influence that shall outlast his earthly life. The memory of the just is blessed. Yet how often we appear to see the efforts made by a good man in life blighted at his death. As soon as Gideon was dead, the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. Pathetic the statement, short-lived Gideon's influence. The people restrained by Gideon's presence, but not converted by his example. Superficial changes not lasting. Rulers may do much, but the gospel only can work a permanent reformation. Gideon's goodness forgotten as soon as Gideon was buried. Touching the statement there arose a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph. Still more touching that Gideon's goodness was so soon overlooked. How sad to think that we, too, will soon be forgotten! None found to show kindness to our house according to our goodness. Others take our places. Others, perhaps, only remember to find fault with our methods. Well does Matthew Henry say—No wonder if those who forget their God, forget their friends. True religion the true bond of earthly friendship. To be the friend of God is to be the friend of man. Seek to remember our benefactors even after their death. A

mistake on the other side. Neglect the benefactors in life and honour after death. Moderns still kill their prophets, and build their tombs. Good deeds may be forgotten on earth, but not in heaven. God never forgets. Words spoken to help the weak, to cheer the disconsolate, and to guide the perplexed will be remembered. The very tears shed over human woe and sin will have their place in the final adjustment. When the mighty transactions of kings and of warriors have passed into obscurity, when the researches of philosophers and of scientific men have lost their attraction, when the poet's flights have ceased to exert their wizardry, and the musician's strains to thrill, and the painter's canvas is perished like the shrivelled parchment scroll, then will shine forth in heavenly colours, stamped with divine approval, those words of love, and those works of faith, which may escape the notice of the children of this world.

WM. BURROWS, B.A.

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### The Hypocrite's Hope.

“THE HOPE OF THE HYPOCRITE IS AS A SPIDER'S WEB.”—  
*Job viii. 14.*



THE similes of the Bible are not drawn from any one particular source. All the workings of nature are ransacked to illustrate spiritual things. The commonest objects of daily life, and the most ordinary circumstances by which we are surrounded, are made to do duty as monitors to our souls. Since the Word of God presses into its service these things, we must not disdain to use them

as well. We are here taught a lesson from the spider. In considering the text we have to inquire—

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE HOPE OF THE HYPOCRITE?

The hope of the hypocrite is the expectation of an unrighteous person. A *hypocrite* is a person who professes to be what he is not, who assumes a character which is not his own. But the word may be applied in a much wider sense. It applies to every one who makes any profession of a religious life, but does not accurately carry out its principles into practice. Hence we may include a great number who would very much object to appropriate the title. Alas, it is a solemn truth! We call our country a Christian land; we profess to be a God-fearing people, we sign our children with the sign of the cross. Unless we repudiate our baptismal vows, we are brought into covenant relationship with God. How few there are who act as if they are His. Called the children of God, and yet in reality the children of the Devil! Unless such repudiate their title, they are hypocrites. Of course there are degrees in hypocrisy. There are the unintentional hypocrites, and there are the deliberate hypocrites. We may include moreover (1) *Those who hope to be saved by their own works or deservings.* Those who regularly attend church or chapel, and yet make no effort to acquire real saving faith. (2) *Those who imagine they are not so bad as their neighbours.* Who think that therefore they have no need of salvation, and appear to their own selves different to what they are. (3) *Those who deliberately make a profession of what they know they do not possess.* There are many who do so, either from a desire to be thought better than they are, or because they believe that outward religion is sufficient. Now most of these persons expect

to get to heaven. This is their hope, whether they deserve it or no. Like Balaam, they wish to "die the death of the righteous," and hope it may be theirs. This is what is meant by the HOPE OF THE HYPOCRITE. Now what does our text tell us about such a hope? That it is like a "spider's web." It is as flimsy, fragile, and valueless. Let us point out

II. WHY THE HOPE OF THE HYPOCRITE IS LIKE A SPIDER'S WEB. (1) *Because it is plausible in appearance.* Nothing looks more beautiful than a spider's web. It is perfection of workmanship, and a most perfect specimen of art. As we see it in the fields, spread out on the hedges, and covered with the silver drops of dew, it is an object to be greatly admired. How plausible may be the character of a hypocrite! how regular his attendance at the house of God! how charming the virtues he cultivates—his charity, his self-denial, his amiability—he may well be taken for a genuine Christian. (2) *Because it is deceptive in purpose.* Its very beauty is to ensnare and deceive. It was never made or intended for its own beauty. It is treacherous, and woe be to the unwary insect that, led by thoughtlessness, admiration, or curiosity, ventures too near its precincts. (3) *Because it forms a hiding place for its owner.* While the sun is shining upon the golden web, down in some dark corner sits the spider, his ugliness hidden by his crafty but beautiful web. There he remains ready to pounce upon the first victim who may come within his reach. The outside show of a hypocrite may be comely, even beautiful, but nothing can be more repulsive than the inner heart which is hidden away beneath. (4) *Because it comes out of himself.* The spider weaves its own web out of his own body. He

calls in the help of no one else. He is satisfied with what he himself can perform. So with the hypocrite. Self-esteem is the rock upon which he splits. There is no religion like his own, no righteousness like his, and so he wraps himself up in it like a web, and desires none of the righteousness of his Saviour, or the pardon of his God. (5) *Because it does not answer any other good purpose, except the temporary sustenance of the owner.* It does not afford shelter, for the first breath will blow it away ; nor a dwelling, for it is too flimsy. But it provides food for the spider. How many a hypocrite lives on his profession. He puts on religion for some selfish purpose ; goes to church or chapel to get custom, and to gain the money of the respectable. (6) *Because at the last it must be swept away.* The spider's web may remain in a hidden corner for a season, but at last the prudent housewife will be sure to detect it, and she will call her maid, who with her brush will make but short work both of the spider and his web. So the hypocrite may for a time escape the notice of his fellow-creatures, but the time will come when the all-searching eye of God shall see this refuge of lies, and it shall be swept away, and destroyed in the fire of hell.

*Vicar of Colerne, Chippenham.*

J. S. BIRD, B.A.

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### Hypocrisy.

A hypocrite may be both the fairest and the foulest creature in the world ; he may be fairest outwardly in the eyes of man, and foulest inwardly in the sight of God. How uncommonly do such unclean swans cover over their black flesh with their white feathers. Though such wear the mantle of Samuel, that should bear the name of Satan.

*Secker.*



# *Germes of Thought.*

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## THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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### The Worthless, the Subordinate, and the Vital in Personal Christianity.

"BUT I WILL COME TO YOU SHORTLY, IF THE LORD WILL, AND WILL KNOW, NOT THE SPEECH OF THEM WHICH ARE PUFFED UP, BUT THE POWER. FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD, BUT IN POWER."—1 Cor. iv. 19, 20.

IN the first part of these verses we have two things worthy of note. First: The spirit that should regulate all our purposes. "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will." Paul had purposed to visit Corinth, but he held that purpose subject to the will of God—"If the Lord will." This is the spirit that should ever rule finite minds. Secondly: The liability of the best men to disappointments. It seems that some circum-

stance had occurred to prevent Paul from paying his intended visit to Corinth, so that he had to send Timothy instead. This disappointment caused some of his enemies at Corinth to be "puffed up." Disappointment is the lot of all, even of the best.

The words suggest three things in relation to Christianity: the *worthless*, the *subordinate*, and the *vital*.

I. THE WORTHLESS. "*The speech of them which are puffed up.*" It may be that the special reference of the Apostle here is to those members of the Church at Corinth who proudly asserted that Paul would not venture

to visit Corinth again. And when they heard that he was sending Timothy instead they boasted, may be, that Paul was afraid to come himself. They were "puffed up" with the idea that they knew more about Paul's feeling and intention than their fellow members. They were inflated with the spirit of vanity and conceit. Now there has always been, and still is, a great deal of this conceit in professors of religion. What is called the Christian world seems to be as rife with "puffs" as the world of commerce, literature, or politics. The "puffed up" spirit of conceit is disgustingly prevalent. Some in connection with Christianity are "puffed up, First: On account of the superior *contributions they are able to make to the cause of charity and religion.* Having more of this world's goods than others, their

names stand pre-eminent on subscription lists, are emblazoned in reports, and are loudly trumpeted in secretarial oratory on platforms. The more they give the more they are praised, and the more they are praised the more they are "puffed up." Some are "puffed up," Secondly: On account of their superior *intellectual endowments.* Not a few, both amongst the laity and the preachers in our churches, imagine themselves as possessing mental faculties and furniture, far superior to the majority, and they are "puffed up." But the very fact that they are "puffed up" on this ground, proves the inferiority of their mental endowments. As a rule, the higher a man's intellectual endowments, the more humble he will be. The prigs and pedants in our pulpits, as well as in our pews, are objects of disgust to the truly

thoughtful and devout. Some are "puffed up," Thirdly : On account of the *extensive popularity they have obtained*. Not long since, an inflated pulpiteer was boasting to me of the crowds he attracted to his church, and the wonderful relish they displayed for his utterances. Those who are acquainted to any extent with the gross tastes, crude notions, and vulgar sentiments of the populace, will scarcely be disposed to render great honour to the man who will attract the largest numbers. The most miserable prints have the largest circulation, the most empty talkers attract the largest audiences. Some are "puffed up," Fourthly : On account of the *supposed superiority of the Church or sect to which they belong*. Such people are constantly glorifying "*our Church*," "*our denomination*," "*our*

*body*." A great Churchman must be a small man, a great Nonconformist must be a small man. He who is impressed with the greatness of the universe, still more with the greatness of God, could hardly consider any human institution great. What is the roof or dome of the greatest cathedral on earth to the spangled heavens that over-arch us? Some are "puffed up," Fifthly : On account of the *assumption that they and their community are the special favourites of heaven*. There are those who regard themselves as being "in the covenant," the "dear elect," the "chosen few," whilst the great bulk of the race are outside the pale of saving mercy and the divine regard ; and they are "puffed up" by this impious delusion, and talk to their fellow-men with supercilious haughtiness. If a man wishes to meet

with egotism in its most loathsome form, let him go amongst the members of Calvinian sects. Well does Adam Smith, the great political economist, say, "Vanity is the foundation of the most ridiculous and contemptible vices—the vices of affectation and common lying." Aye, this "puffing up" spirit, this vanity is "the canker of religion, it gnaws like a worm at the root, and when we look for the harvest it is dust and bitterness." Another thing which the words suggest in relation to Christianity is—

II. The SUBORDINATE. What is the subordinate? The "word." "*The kingdom of God is not in word.*" Take the "word" here as representing profession in religion. What the Apostle says is, that the kingdom of God is not in profession. There should be a "word" or profession, but this is not

religion. Not unfrequently do we find, in the New Testament especially, the subordinate element depreciated as compared with the vital. Thus Paul depreciates baptism as compared with preaching. First: A profession of true religion is important in itself inasmuch as *it is a duty*. "Whosoever shall confess Me before men," says Christ, "him will I confess before My Father and His holy angels." But it is a duty only where the reality exists. The man who has not religion sins and acts in violation of duty and his profession is hypocrisy. The profession of a thing is not the thing itself, though the divine thing should have public expression. It should be strong enough to be irrepresible in demonstration. Secondly: The profession of true religion is an *aid to religion itself*. It is possible, it may be, for religion

to exist in the soul, where there is no public profession of it. It may be like a seed germinating under the soil, but in this state it must be very weak as well as uninfluential. The man who has the real thing in him, however weak, and makes a declaration of it, strengthens and developes it thereby. By revealing its existence to others it comes out like the seed in sunshine in bud, and flower and fruit. The "word," therefore, or confession of religion, is of value, but its value is *subordinate*. It is not vital or of primary moment. Nicodemus was a disciple, though a secret one. Profession without possession is a sin and a hindrance. Profession with possession is a duty and a help. Very faithful is the language of Knowles:—"A right profession aggravates the condemnation of a wrong conduct: and a wrong

conduct discredits the very name of a right profession. Indeed, the bare profession of that which is good causes with it an explicit censure upon everything that is bad." Another thing which the words suggest in relation to Christianity is—

III. The VITAL. "*The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.*" First: It is a "*power.*" It is the "*power*" of *truth* over the intellect, inspiring and regulating all its operations. It is the "*power*" of *love* over the heart, drawing out all its sympathies into the supremely good. It is the "*power*" of *right* over the conscience. Personal Christianity is not weakness, but power, the highest kind of power—power over the mind. Secondly: It is a *reigning* power. It is called here the "*kingdom.*" It is a power above all other powers—a power that



becomes the monarch of the soul, takes the reins and subordinates all its faculties and forces. Thirdly: It is a *divine* power. "*The kingdom of GOD.*" The human soul comes under many powers, the power of sensuality and the power of superstition. These powers *reign*, they are powers regal in the

great majority of mankind. But personal Christianity is not merely a power—a reigning power—but the *reigning power of God*, it is divine. "The kingdom of God is within you." This, then, is the vital thing—the reign of God in the soul. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

### Great Opportunities.

"NOW WILL I SING TO MY WELL BELOVED, TOUCHING HIS VINEYARD," &c., Isa. v. 1-7.

FICTITIOUS literature is not wrong. The Bible sanctions and employs it, it makes it the vehicle to convey some of its most vital and most sublime truths. In it God speaks to us in fables, allegories, and parables. The text is one of the oldest parables, as well as one of the most beautiful, instructive, and impressive, that is to be found

in the literature of the world. It brings under our attention the great moral opportunities of man in three aspects.

I. AS ABUNDANTLY POSSESSED. "*What could have been done more for my vineyard that I have not done for it?*" The vineyard here is represented, First: As in a *salubrious position*. "A vineyard in a very fruitful hill." It was not on the burning brow of a mountain, nor in the shady deeps of the

valley, but on the slopes of a "fruitful hill." The vineyard is here represented, Secondly: As *subject to culturing care*. The husbandman did several things for it. He "fenced" it, guarded it from the hoof of the brute, and the tread of the footpad. He gathered the stones out of it, so that it might have nothing around its roots but fertilising mould, no stones to obstruct the sun or the rain from penetrating to its fibres. He "planted it with the choicest vines," carefully selected from a large stock. He "built a tower in the midst of it," from which the vine dresser could exercise a watchful guard. He "made a winepress therein" by which the refreshing and delicious juice could be extracted and turned into wine. All this is a beautiful portraiture of the Jewish people. Canaan was the fruitful hill; the

theocratic government was the fence built around it; the seed of Abraham—the most fertile minded race under heaven—was the fruitful vine; the Temple was the tower; the great God was the Husbandman who selected the site, built the fence, chose the vine, removed the stones, built and occupied the tower. Great were the moral opportunities of the Jewish people, so great that the great Husbandman propounds the question, "What could have been done more for my vineyard that I have not done for it?"

Now what is true of the Jewish people is more or less true of all men, more true of Christendom, and especially true of England. How great are our opportunities for moral and spiritual improvement? Our geographical position, surrounded by the seas and

territorially the centre of the earth, so fenced about as to be impregnable to foreign invaders; with an order of men that may be justly considered the choice vine of the race, fertile in invention, bold in enterprise, endowed with rare possibilities of progress, with the Christian Church and its many branches and auxiliaries as a tower. "What could have been done more" for us? What rare opportunities has every man amongst us! Bibles in our houses, Churches near our dwellings, preachers of every type of mind, class of thought, and oratoric power. The subject brings under our attention moral opportunities,

II. AS SHAMEFULLY ABUSED. "*When I looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes.*" Those which are called "wild grapes" do not mean such as grow from uncultivated

vines. Such grapes are sometimes palatable and pleasant, but they were, it is generally supposed, a production that was both offensive and pernicious. Gesenius supposes it to be "monkshood," a poisonous herb producing berries like grapes, but of most disgusting odour. From certain references in the Old Testament, it is evident that such offensive and poisonous fruits resembling grapes grew in Palestine. Moses refers to in the following words, "Their vine is as the vine of Sodom, their grapes as grapes of gall, their clusters bitter." The idea is that the Jewish people under the culturing care of God, produced instead of good fruit, the foetid noxious fruit of the wild vine. And truly their history demonstrates the lamentable fact. From age to age they grew more and more corrupt, morally

offensive and pernicious. Thus they went on until the days of Christ. They so filled up the measure of their iniquities until the whole nation became a putrescent carcase, whose odour attracted the eagles of eternal retribution. Thus they became worse than fruitless; unfruitfulness is bad enough, but pernicious fruitfulness is worse. The history of the world shows it is a common thing for men to grow worse under the culturing care of God.

Pharaoh's heart was hardened under the ministry of Moses, Saul became worse under the ministry of Samuel, Judas became a devil under the ministry of Christ. As in the natural world so in the moral, the quickening sunbeam and the fertilising shower, and the soil prepared to grow precious fruit, often grow only worthless weeds and poisonous helmlock.

What are wicked men but helmlock plants in the great vineyard of God? The subject brings under our attention moral opportunities,

III. AS UTTERLY LOST. "*And now go to, and I will tell you what I will do with my vineyard.*" Here are three evils. First: *The withdrawal of Divine protection.* "*I will take away the hedge thereof.*" This was literally fulfilled in the Jewish nation. Divine protection was withdrawn, and the Romans entered and took possession. This is true of the human soul individually. The time comes with the finally impenitent soul when heaven withdraws its guardianship. When this is the case fiends enter in, revel in it, and ravage it, and every germ of virtuous sentiment is trodden in the dust. Secondly: *The termination of all culturing effort.* "*It shall not*

*be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up thorns and briers.*" A time comes with the unfruitful soul, when all Divine influences cease. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," &c. "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone," &c. Thirdly: The *cessation of fertilising influences*. "*I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.*" It is all over now. The great Father has withdrawn all protection, ceased all culturing efforts, withholds all fertilising influences.

There is nothing now but hell.

CONCLUSION. Mark the *mercifulness of God towards this earth*. It is under the culturing care of the great God. Mark the *great end of life*. What is the end of life? Moral cultivation. Mark the *philosophy of all improvement*. Why is the world morally improving, —improving it is, though slowly, yet certainly? It is because the Great Husbandman is building fences, digging, and pruning, &c.

### A Fourfold Aspect of the Infinite.

"I AM GOD AND THERE IS NONE ELSE : I AM GOD AND THERE IS NONE LIKE UNTO ME, DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING, AND FROM ANCIENT TIMES THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT YET DONE, SAYING, MY COUNSEL SHALL STAND, AND I WILL DO ALL MY PLEASURE : CALLING A RAVENOUS BIRD FROM THE EAST, THE MAN THAT EXECUTETH MY COUNSEL FROM A FAR COUNTRY ; YEA, I

HAVE SPOKEN IT, I WILL ALSO BRING IT TO PASS : I HAVE PURPOSED IT, I WILL ALSO DO IT." *Isa.* xlv. 9-11.

THIS chapter is a continuation of the argument commenced in a preceding one to expose the folly of idolatry, and to induce the Jews while in Babylonian



captivity to put their trust in the one true and living God. The scene of the prophecy is laid in Babylon, and at the time when the city was about being taken by Cyrus. Confining attention to the verses now under notice, we have the Almighty presented in four glorious aspects.

I. AS THE ONE AND ONLY GOD. "*I am God, and there is none else.*" The Bible establishes the doctrine of monotheism: there is one God and only one. This doctrine, First:—*Agrees with our spiritual nature.* The whole soul, both in its searches after truth and love, one for the intellect, the other for the heart, struggles after unity, it turns to the centre, as the needle to the pole, as the flower to the sun. This doctrine, Secondly: *Explains the harmony of the universe.* How is it that all things in their

constitution fit into each other, and in their operations are so harmonious and uniform? The whole machine shows in all its parts and revolutions that it had but one Architect. This doctrine Thirdly:—*Makes clear human obligation.* If there be but one God, His will should be the *supreme* law of all our activities; His being should be the centre of our sympathies and love. Were there more gods than one we might be distracted on the question as to who should have our love and obedience. But there is but one, hence we should love the Lord our God with all our hearts, &c. The Almighty is presented here,

II. AS ACQUAINTED WITH ALL THE FUTURITIES OF THE UNIVERSE. "*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from*

*ancient times, the things that are not yet done."*

There was a beginning, and there will be an end.

This, perhaps, is true of all created existences.

Between the beginning and the end of the universe, what millions of ages intervene, all crowded

with stupendous events and revolutions. There

is one mind in the universe, and only one, whose

infinite glance comprehended all, swept over all

space, and over all durations. Though such

a fact baffles all our attempts at comprehension,

its denial would undeify God. The whole

history of the universe from beginning to end,

was in His mind before it took active shapes, or

concrete embodiments. Hence (1) He can have no

surprises. He is infinitely removed from all astonish-

ments. (2) He can have no disappointments. He

can anticipate nothing

that will not come to pass. Indeed, can He

anticipate at all? All to Him are present realities.

"To Thee, great God, there's nothing old appears,

To Thee there's nothing new."

The Almighty is presented here—

III. AS PURPOSING

NOTHING THAT CAN BY ANY

POSSIBILITY FAIL. "*My*

*counsel shall stand and I*

*will do all my pleasure.*

Observe First: God has a concern for His pleasure.

The Apostle calls His

pleasure a "*good* plea-

sure." What is it? It

is the pleasure of dis-

interested benevolence.

The highest pleasure of a

rational and moral exis-

tent is the full develop-

ment of his benevolent,

affections in the making

of others happy. This is

the happiness of the Infi-

nite. Observe Secondly:

All God's purposes point

to His pleasure. What-

ever will make His

creatures happy is His

pleasure, and the whole universe is constructed on this principle. His pleasure or happiness, so to speak, is wrapped up in the happiness of His creatures, and to this all His purposes point. Observe, Thirdly: *None of God's purposes shall fail.* "*My purposes shall stand.*" The special purpose here referred to was terribly realised (Dan. v. 30). Our purposes are constantly being broken; the vast shore of human history is crowded with the wrecks of broken purposes. Our purposes are broken sometimes (1) Through the lack of *power* to carry them out. Difficulties arise and baffle us at the outset which we never anticipated. (2) Through the lack of *time* to carry them out. Death comes and paralyses the executive faculty. God has ample power and ample time to carry out His purposes. The

Almighty is presented here—

IV. AS HAVING ABSOLUTE POWER TO SUBORDINATE EVEN UNGODLY MEN TO HIS SERVICE. "*Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth My counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it.*" By common consent the reference here is to Cyrus. His *residence* is here indicated. "From the east." A reference undoubtedly to Persia, which lay to the east, and was the home of Cyrus. His *character* is here indicated. "A ravenous bird." Like the eagle or the vulture burning with instincts ruthless and ruining. Cyrus was thus a wicked man, but this very wicked man the Almighty employed to work out His purpose in delivering His people from Babylonian thral-

dom. In God's great moral kingdom He has two classes of servants. (1) Those who serve Him *by* their will. All holy angels and sainted men are of this class. (2) Those who serve Him *against* their will. Such are wicked men and devils. "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him." He will have His purposes carried out. He chains devils to His chariot, and drives them

on to the execution of His plans.

CONCLUSION :—What an ennobling view of our God ! He is One : let us centre our souls on Him ; He knows all futurities, let us trust His Providence. He will fulfil all His purposes, let us acquiesce in His arrangements. He renders even His moral enemies subservient to His own will, therefore let us "trust in Him who liveth for ever."

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OUR God is still as kind, and all His gifts  
 Like wondrous, like unlimited, like fair,  
 As when the wind first blew. Man is to God  
 That he hath ever been. Still shines the sun  
 As pure on the grey rotting rock,  
 As on the universal matter once,  
 Ere now marmoreal floods had spread their couch  
 Of perdurable snow, or granite wrought  
 Its skyward impulse from earth's hearth of fire  
 Up to insanest heights ; or thunder oped  
 His cloudy lips and spake. And still to them  
 Who live alone with nature and with God,  
 Smile with the sun and sadden with the moon,  
 The elements their brethren, e'en as men  
 Come gifts unasked, unmeasured, like the light  
 Which lights at countless points the shapeless whole."

Bailey.

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plentitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

## No. IX.

### CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENCE.

"LET NO MAN THEREFORE JUDGE YOU IN MEAT, OR IN DRINK, OR IN RESPECT OF AN HOLYDAY, OR OF THE NEW MOON OR OF THE SABBATH DAYS: WHICH ARE A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME; BUT THE BODY IS OF CHRIST. LET NO MAN BEGUILÉ YOU OF YOUR REWARD IN A VOLUNTARY HUMILITY AND WORSHIPPING OF ANGELS, INTRUDING INTO THOSE THINGS WHICH HE HATH NOT SEEN, VAINLY PUFFED UP BY HIS FLESHLY MIND; AND NOT HOLDING THE HEAD, FROM WHICH ALL THE BODY BY JOINTS AND BANDS HAVING NOURISHMENT MINISTERED, AND KNIT TOGETHER, INCREASETH WITH THE INCREASE OF GOD."—*Col.* ii. 16-19.

REMEMBERING the evils in the church at Colosse, namely, the ceremonialism, the asceticism, the appeal to angelic mediators, and at the same time recalling the theme of the paragraph preceding the verses now before us—

the complete sufficiency of Christ as man's Mediator, Nature's Lord and Consecrator, and the soul's Deliverer from bondage to ceremonies, we are prepared to notice the result of Christ's work for man and over man, as here suggested, and to



consider the great theme of *Christian Independence*.

I. — THAT CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENCE IS A FREEDOM FROM THE BONDAGE OF CEREMONY AND OF SUPERSTITION.—The sixteenth verse suggests what ceremony may bind men; the eighteenth, what superstition may enslave them. We notice the Christian's independence (1) *From the bondage of ceremonialism*. The form of this bondage varies, but its spirit continues: the form of that bondage in those days was (A) Bondage as to *food*. There were restrictions as to meat and drink, which were rigid as any moral code. They were mostly Jewish, and had wrongly been inserted in the Christian system. (B) Bondage as to *days*. These were also mostly Jewish anniversaries, or monthly, or weekly celebrations. The claim to

their observance was so punctilious as to be a sore bondage. From both of these the spirit of Christ frees men. As to meats, "nothing was common or unclean,"—as to days the shadow thrown in advance had given way to the substance. We note the Christian's independence (2) *From the bondage of superstition*. A heathen superstition had intruded in the form of the worship of angels which led to "a voluntary humility,"—that is to an artificial, self-conscious affectation of humility, leading to the prostration of men before imaginary superior beings. From this parade of humility, and morbidly fostered prostration Christ delivers by bringing each soul into conscious relationship with the Highest. That lofty relationship enjoyed, there will be no cringing before any who are inferior to Him.

II. — THAT FALSE TEACHERS SEEK TO DEPRIVE MEN OF THIS INDEPENDENCE. So they did in Paul's day, and so they do now. They "beguile" men; trip them up in the race and hinder their attaining the prize. Two sets of false teachers so beguile men. (1) The *sentimentalist*, those who foster among their adherents a pietism under the name of unworldliness. (2) The *sacerdotalist*, those who exercise over their followers a priestism that makes the man a slave of the institution, instead of the institution being the servant of the man.

III.—THAT CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENCE IS DERIVED FROM AND NOURISHED BY UNION WITH CHRIST. (1) The right relationship with Christ gives independence because of the *strength* flowing from

union with the *Head*, the source of all power and control. (2) This right union with Christ gives independence, because it involves healthy relationship to the *Body*, *i.e.*, all fellow Christians. There is none of the ruptured relationship with Christ or the Church that some count liberty, but which is really only a license. There is rather the being healthily and perfectly united to Christ and the Church, by the ligaments of loving relationship; ligaments these, that hold all together, and hold all to Christ, and give Him the complete control of all. Each soul has the liberty just as the limbs of a healthy man have free play. Moreover, such a soul grows with the growth of God.

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# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develope, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle :—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. II.

### PAUL'S GRATITUDE FOR GOOD MEN.

"I THANK MY GOD UPON EVERY REMEMBRANCE OF YOU, ALWAYS IN EVERY PRAYER OF MINE FOR YOU ALL MAKING REQUEST WITH JOY, FOR YOUR FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL FROM THE FIRST DAY UNTIL NOW." (*Phil. i. 3-5*).

There are two things noteworthy here at the outset. First : A minister's hearty *recognition of the moral worth of his people.* "I thank my God upon every remembrance" implies on the writer's

part a very high appreciation of the spiritual excellence of those to whom he wrote. The recognition of worth in others is the indication of a generous nature, an incumbent obligation, and in truth is a rare virtue. So selfish is human nature that the majority of mankind not only ignore the virtues of others, but eagerly mark and magnify their imperfections. It is said that Enoch had this testimony that "he pleased God," and we, like our Maker, should readily bear testimony to worth wherever it appears. Secondly : A minister's *lively vigilance over*

*the interests of his people.* "Upon every remembrance," and "in every prayer," "for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now." He watched over them, not with the eye of curiosity or censorship, anxious to discover and expose their defects, but with the eye of tender love lingering, as it were, for the sight of moral beauty, and heartily thankful whenever it appeared.

There are two things connected with Paul's gratitude as here disclosed, very remarkable and worthy of imitation.

I.—It was gratitude to men EXPRESSED IN PRAYER TO ALMIGHTY GOD. It is common to express our gratitude for services to others by florid utterances or kindly offices, but somewhat rare to give it voice in prayer to Almighty God. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you, all making request with joy" or, as it would be better rendered, "*I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you at all times in every prayer of mine for you all.*" Mark, First: The *fervour* of the prayer. What intense earnestness breathes through this utterance: the man's soul seems aglow with

devout, philanthropic zeal. Mark, Secondly: The *universality* of the prayer. "For you all." A similar expression Paul uses in relation to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. i. 2). "We give thanks to God always for you all." There is not one of you for whom we—that is Paul and Timotheus—do not give thanks.

Now what better way is there to show gratitude to men than by interceding for them all with the common Father? There is no way more *practicable*. We may be too poor or too weak to return their favours, but none are too poor or weak to pray. There is no way more *effective*. If the All-merciful Father confer on them His favour they will have more than worlds can bestow. The other thing connected with Paul's gratitude worthy of imitation is—

II. It was gratitude to men ON ACCOUNT OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMON GOOD. "For your fellowship in the gospel," or towards the gospel. Dr. Samuel Davidson renders it, "For your fellowship in respect of the gospel." What is meant is, I presume, for your fellow working or your working with us in the fellowship of the gospel. Some suppose that the special reference is here to

the contribution that they made towards his temporal needs as referred to in chap. iv. 15. "Now ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only." But if he refers to this specially, the high probability is that he also refers to their co-operation with him in the general service of the gospel. The Apostle felt that whatever services they rendered him, they were rendered, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the grand cause in which they were mutually interested. As a private disciple it mattered little or nothing to him whether he fared well or ill, died of starvation or martyrdom, but inasmuch as he was entrusted with the gospel he felt the continuation of his existence of some moment to the common good. "Nevertheless," he says, "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you, and having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith" (verses 24 and 25).

His gratitude, then, was not on account of any favour they had shown to him as an indivi-

dual saint, for personal comforts, but to him as a public man labouring for the common good. What a lofty gratitude is this: so unselfish, so sublimely generous. When will the time come when men shall be thankful to each other, not merely for personal benefits, but for the services they rendered to the general weal? Every man who helps on the cause of truth, Christly virtue, and human happiness in the world, whether he belongs to our nation, our Church, or not, deserves our gratitude. In truth, the best way for us to serve ourselves as individuals is to serve the race by diffusing that system of moral and remedial truth which alone can crush the demon ills and create the divine beauties of the race. Never can we be sufficiently thankful to heaven for the mere existence of *good men* in this world of ours. They are the "salt of the earth," counteracting that corruption in which all impenitent souls find their hell. They are the ozone in the moral atmosphere of life. They are the highest revelation of God on this earth and the highest exemplification of duty. Like stars they reveal the infinite above us, and throw light upon our path below.



## *Homiletical Breviaries.*

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No. CCCXXIV.

### The Supreme Problem.

“LORD WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?” (Acts ix. 6.)

ANALYSE these words and you will discover four important elements of belief underlying the thoughts of the speaker. I. A consciousness that SOMETHING MUST BE DONE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SALVATION. A man cannot morally be saved by inaction. Effort is essential. II. A consciousness that something must be done AGREEABLE TO THE DIVINE WILL. “What wilt *Thou* have me to do?” The work to be done must be done, not by blind excitement or capricious act, but by the will of God. God’s will is to be consulted. III. A consciousness that the thing to be done must be done by the MAN HIMSELF. “What wilt Thou have *me* to do?” No one can do the work that is necessary for me—no priest, preacher, or Church. I must do it. IV. A consciousness of THE NEED OF DIVINE HELP in the work. “What wilt *Thou* have me to do?” I want Divine direction. As if he had said something must be done, whatever Thou teachest I will do. “Teach me Thy will.”

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No. CCCXXV.

### The Ideal Reformation.

“WHOSE HEART THE LORD OPENED THAT SHE ATTENDED UNTO THE THINGS WHICH WERE SPOKEN OF PAUL.” (Acts xvi. 14).

THESE words were spoken of Lydia, and they represent the *ideal reformation*. Men are always aiming at some reformation in art, business, politics, religion. But all reformations are worthless compared to the reformation of which Lydia was the subject. I. This is a reformation effected in the CENTRE OF EXISTENCE. “Whose

*heart* the Lord opened." This was not a reformation on parchment, but a reformation of the springs of activity. If the heart is changed all the emotions, purposes, and activities of life will be changed. II. This is a reformation that ORIGINATED IN DIVINE AGENCY. "The Lord opened." Lydia's heart was shut up by worldliness, ignorance, prejudice, &c. These were the bars and bolts and doors by which she was confined. Christ broke open the door, let in the sunbeam and the vital air of truth. III. This is a reformation that brought the SOUL INTO THE HIGHEST DISCIPLESHIP. "She attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul." She became a pupil in the school of Christ.

#### No. CCCXXVI.

### Prayer Lifting the Soul into the Transcendental.

"WHILE I PRAYED IN THE TEMPLE I WAS IN A TRANCE." Acts xxii. 17.

PAUL speaks this of himself, and the words reveal a common thing reaching the wonderful. The common thing was prayer. Most men pray either rightly or wrongly. Some to the wrong god, some to the right God in a wrong way. But here is this common thing, prayer, reaching the wonderful. "I was in a trance," that is a state in which the mind is transported into the super-sensuous and sublime. Paul probably refers to this in 2 Cor. xi. 1-5. The words teach—I. The SUBLIME POSSIBILITIES OF THE HUMAN SOUL. By a mysterious power of abstraction it can close up all the physical senses, shut out the external universe, and transport itself on the wings of an angel into a world where there are scenes too grand for description, and communications surpassing utterance. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John, as well as Paul were often transported to these supreme states. They teach—II. The INCOMPARABLE WORTH OF TRUE PRAYER. It was while Paul was praying that he got into this trance. Prayer is the road into the celestial. While Daniel was praying, the man Gabriel touched him about the time of evening oblation, and said "O Daniel" (Dan. ix. 21). While Peter was praying on the housetop, "he fell into ecstasy, and a man stood." &c. (Acts x. 9.)

No. CCCXXVII.

## The Rule of Retribution.

“HOWMUCH SHE HATH GLORIFIED HERSELF, AND LIVED DELICIOUSLY, SO MUCH TORMENT AND SORROW GIVE HER: FOR SHE SAITH IN HER HEART, I SIT A QUEEN, AND AM NO WIDOW, AND SHALL SEE NO SORROW.”  
—*Rev.* xviii. 7.

SOME places and persons in history become so terribly depraved that their very names become synonyms for wickedness in its most abominable forms. Thus Babylon in the Book of Revelation stands for all that is morally bad, the embodiment of pride, tyranny, cruelty, idolatry, sensuality, &c. The text has a reference to this, and confining ourselves simply to the words, the subject that comes up to notice is *man's future retribution ruled by his present condition*. “How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.” This, stripped of all historical and metaphorical allusions, means, the present circumstances of the sinner shall rule his future suffering. I offer three remarks on the subject. I. This rule COMMENDS ITSELF TO OUR SENSE OF JUSTICE. That those of the wicked who in this world live in affluence, and have more than heart can wish, possess abundant opportunities for intellectual and moral improvement, and means of doing good, should in *future retribution* fare alike with those who have none of these blessings or advantages, would be an outrage on our sense of right. Justice requires a balancing of human affairs, a kind of compensation for existing discrepancies, and this mankind will have in the great retributive future. Another remark I offer is II. This rule ANSWERS TO BIBLICAL TEACHING. Throughout the whole Scripture record it is taught that sinners, after they have passed through their probationary period, will be dealt with according to the mercies they have abused, the opportunities they have neglected, and the advantages they have wasted. “He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not” &c. “It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah” &c. “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime didst receive,” &c. Another remark I offer is III. This rule AGREES WITH UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE. *Conscious contrast* between a propitious past and a distressing present is and must ever be an element in mental suffering. There are two paupers equal, I will suppose, in

age, capacity, sensibility, and character. The hovels they live in, and the means of their sustenance are also equal, but the one is intensely wretched and the other is comparatively happy. Why this? The wretched man has come down into that hovel from the home of opulence and luxury, and the other has never had a better home. Thus the contrast gives a misery to the one which the other cannot experience. So it must be in the future, the sinner who goes into retribution from mansions, colleges, and churches will, by the law of contrast, find a more terrible hell, than the poor creature who has fallen into it from regions of ignorance and pauperism. Far more terrible, methinks, will be the hell of the aristocracy, than the hell of the struggling and starving millions. "*How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her.*"

CONCLUSION :—Worldly advantages are not only always *transitory*, but often *permanently injurious*. Though the sinner's "excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach to the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever."

## No. CCCXXVIII.

### Moral Evil Symbolised.

"AND A MIGHTY ANGEL TOOK UP A STONE LIKE A GREAT MILLSTONE, AND CAST IT INTO THE SEA, SAYING, THUS WITH VIOLENCE SHALL THAT GREAT CITY, BABYLON, BE THROWN DOWN, AND SHALL BE FOUND NO MORE AT ALL."—*Rev. xviii. 21.*

IN these words we have a *symbolisation of moral evil*.

I. A symbolisation of its NATURE. Babylon is a symbol. Not unfrequently, as I have before intimated, is moral evil in the aggregate represented by some one object; sometimes by the "old man," that is, the unrenewed, depraved man, he is the embodiment of all the elements of sin. Sometimes by the "world." "He that loveth the world," &c., that is, the moral evil embodied in the world. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, it is represented as a colossal image, representing the wealth and power of empire, the pride, the idolatry, the wickedness of all kingdoms. Here in the text it

is represented by the "great city Babylon." Babylon stands here as the grand symbol of moral evil. If you want to see sin, or moral evil, in all its hideous aspects, in all its infernal operations, in all its damning consequences, study the great city of Babylon. In this city you will find not only the evils of the Roman Catholic church, but of all churches, of all institutions, of all countries and climes, aye, of all human hearts. The great city Babylon is in every unrenewed soul. Here is

II. A symbolisation of its OVERTHROW. "*And a mighty angel took up a stone, like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*" The moral evil of the world is to be destroyed; it is not to exist for ever. The various figures used to symbolise it are set forth as objects for utter destruction. The world is to be "overcome" as Christ overcame it. The "old man," which is "corrupt," is to be "crucified with his affections and lusts." The great image is to be shivered to pieces by the "stone," the symbol of divine truth, and here the great city Babylon is represented as being thrown like a great "millstone into the sea." Two remarks are suggested concerning its overthrow. First: It is to be overthrown by *superhuman agency*. "A mighty angel;" a messenger from heaven. Was not Christ a mighty Messenger, sent from heaven for this purpose? Yes, He came to "destroy the works of the devil." It has been said that good alone can overcome evil. True, but it must be good in a *supernatural* form, and in this form the gospel brings us the good. Secondly: It is to be overthrown in such a way as *never to appear again*. Babylon is thrown like a great millstone into the sea. "*And shall be found no more at all.*" As Pharaoh sank like lead in the mighty waters, and rose no more to life, so shall moral evil, like a "mighty millstone," fall into the fathomless abysses of eternal ruin. "*Shall be found no more at all.*" No less than six times are these words repeated. Some one has said that they toll like a funeral knell; I would rather say that they chime like a triumphant peal. Thank God, mighty and wide as is the dominion of evil in the world, I am prone to believe that it will not endure for ever. All the holy prayers in the universe cry for its ruin. All holy agencies work for it, and Omnipotence is pledged to its overthrow.



# The Preacher's Scrap Book.

## HEROES OF THE RACE.

### No. I.—HEROES OF SCIENCE.



HERE have been men in every age, and they are the regal men of the race who have, by their honest and persevering inquiries after truth reached *convictions* to which they consecrated their life, and to propagate which they were ready to sacrifice existence itself. To them was the transcendent treasure dearer far than wealth, ease, fame, or life itself. We find such men not only in the department of politics, philanthropy, and religion, but in science also. Science has its heroes. In a book recently published by Dr. Smiles, many of these illustrious men are sketched. Three names especially deserve notice, Galileo, Kepler, and Columbus.

Concerning the first, GALILEO, we have the following information. After Lippersley, of Middleburgh, in Holland, had invented the telescope, Galileo took up the idea, and constructed a telescope of his own, with which he ascended the tower of St. Mark, at Venice, to view the heavenly bodies. He directed it to the planets and fixed stars, which he observed with "incredible delight." He discovered the satellites and rings of Jupiter, the phases of Venus, and the spots on the sun. He faithfully recorded the revelations that came down to him direct from the skies. He proceeded with his observations, and discovered, perhaps, more during his lifetime than any future astronomer. But all this was at variance with the recorded ideas of the time. The Inquisition undertook to regulate astronomical science. Galileo was called to Rome, and summoned before the Inquisitors to answer for the heretical doctrine of the earth's motion round the sun. The Inquisitors inserted in the prohibited Index the works of Galileo, Kepler, and Copernicus. Galileo plucked up heart again, and published a new work, in the form of a dialogue, defending his doctrines. He was summoned before the Inquisition, and was compelled, on bended knees, to renounce and abjure his glorious discovery. Galileo wanted the courage of his opinions. But he was an old man of seventy when he denied his

faith. Galileo would not have been persecuted could he have been answered. Yet the truth lived, and the men were set on the right track of observation for all ages to come.

Pascal said of his condemnation, "It is in vain that you (the Jesuits) have procured against Galileo a decree from Rome condemning his opinion of the earth's motion. Assuredly that will never prove it to be at rest; and if we have unerring observations proving that it turns round, not all mankind can keep it from turning, nor themselves from turning with it." Truth may run for a long time underground, but it is sure to work its way to the surface at last: and in proportion to the obstacles it encounters, and the length of its struggle, are the extent and the certainty of its triumph.

Concerning the second *hero*, KEPLER, we are told his life was as sad as that of Galileo. Originally a poor boy, he was admitted to the school at the monastery of Maulbroom, and eventually became a learned man. He accepted the astronomical chair at Gratz, in Styria, and devoted himself to the study of the planets. He was afterwards appointed Imperial mathematician to the Emperor; though his salary was insufficient to maintain himself and family. At Lintz he was excommunicated by the Roman Catholics because of some opinions he had expressed respecting transubstantiation. "Judge," he says to Hoffman, "how far I can assist you, in a place where the priest and school inspector have combined to brand me with the public stigma of heresy, because in every question I take that side which seems to me consonant with the will of God." Kepler was then offered the professorship of mathematics at Bologna, but having the recantation and condemnation of Galileo before him, he declined the chair. "I might" he said, "notably increase my fortune; but, living a German among Germans, I am accustomed to a freedom of speech and manners, which, if persevered in Bologna, would draw upon me, if not danger, at least notoriety, and might expose me to suspicion and party malice." In 1619, Kepler discovered the celebrated law which will be ever memorable in the history of science "That the squares of the periodic times of the planets are to one, another as the cubes of their distances." He recognised with transport the absolute truth of a principle which, for seventeen years, had been the object of his incessant labours. "The die is cast," he said, "the book is written, to be read either now or by

posterity, I care not which. It may well wait a century for a reader, as God waited for six thousand years for an observer."

The next book Kepler published, *The Epitome of the Copernican Astronomy*, was condemned at Rome, and placed in the prohibited Index. In the meantime, his mind was distracted by a far greater trouble. His mother seventy-nine years old, was thrown into prison, condemned to the torture, and was about to be burnt as a witch. Kepler immediately flew to her relief; and arrived at his Swabian home in time to save her from further punishment. But more troubles followed. The States of Styria ordered all the copies of his "Kalendar" for 1624 to be publicly burnt. His library was sealed up by order of the Jesuits, and he was compelled to leave Lintz by the popular insurrection which then prevailed. He went to Sagan, in Silesia, under the protection of Albert Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, and he shortly died there of disease of the brain, the result of too much study.

Of our third hero of science—COLUMBUS—it may be said in truth that he sacrificed his life to the discovery of a new world. The poor wool carder's son of Genoa had long to struggle unsuccessfully with the petty conditions necessary for the realisation of his idea. He dared to believe, on grounds sufficing to his reason, that which the world disbelieved, and scorned and scoffed at. He believed that the earth was round, while the world believed it was as flat as a plate. He believed that the whole circle of the earth, outside the known world, could not be wholly occupied by sea; but that the probability was that continents of land might be contained within it. It was certainly a probability; but the noblest qualities of the soul are often brought forth by the strength of probabilities that appear slight to less daring spirits. In the eyes of his countrymen, few things were more improbable than that Columbus should survive the dangers of unknown seas and land on the shores of a new hemisphere. Columbus was a practical, as well as an intellectual, hero. He went from one state to another, urging kings and emperors to undertake the first visiting of a world which his instructed spirit already discerned in the far-off seas. He first tried his own countrymen at Genoa, but found none ready to help him. He then went to Portugal, and submitted his project to John II., who laid it before his council. He was scouted as extravagant and chimerical. Nevertheless, the king endeavoured to steal Columbus'

idea. A fleet was sent forth in the direction indicated by the navigator, but being frustated by storms and winds, it returned to Lisbon after four days' voyaging. Columbus returned to Genoa, and again renewed propositions to the Republic, but without success. Nothing discouraged him. The finding of the New World was the irrevocable object of his life. He went to Spain, and landed at the town of Palos, in Andalusia. He went by chance to a convent of Franciscans, knocked at the door, and asked for a little bread and water. The prior gratefully received the stranger, entertained him, and learned from him the story of his life. He encouraged him in his hopes, and furnished him with an admission to the Court of Spain, then at Cordova. King Ferdinand received him graciously, but before coming to a decision he desired to lay the project before a council of his wisest men at Salamanca. Columbus had to reply, not only to the scientific arguments laid before him, but to citations from the Bible. The Spanish clergy declared that the theory of an antipodes was hostile to the faith. The earth, they said, was an immense flat disc, and if there was a new earth beyond the ocean, then all men could not be descended from Adam. Columbus was dismissed as a fool. Still bent on his idea, he wrote to the King of England, then to the King of France, without effect. At last, in 1492, Columbus was introduced by Louis de Saint Angel to Queen Isabella of Spain. The friends who accompanied him pleaded his cause with so much force and conviction, that the Queen acceded to their wishes, and promised to take charge of the proposed enterprise.

A fleet of three small caravelles, only one of which was decked, was got ready; and Columbus sailed from the Port of Palos on the 3rd of August, 1492. After his long fight against the ignorance of men, he had now to strive against the superstitions of seamen. He had a long and arduous struggle. The unknown seas, the perils of the deep, the fear lest hunger should befall them, the weary disappointment on the silent main, the repeated disappointment of their hope of seeing land, sometimes rose to mutiny, which Columbus, always full of hope, had the courage to suppress. At last, after seventy days' sail, land was discovered, and Columbus set foot on the island of San Salvador. Then Cuba and Hispaniola were discovered. They were taken possession of in the name of the King and Queen of Spain. At the latter island a fort was built. A commandant and some men were left in it, and Columbus then



returned to Spain to give an account of his discovery. The enthusiasm with which he was received was immense; his fame was great, not only in Spain but throughout the world. He did not long remain in Spain. He set out again for America, this time in command of fourteen caravelles and three large vessels, containing in all about 1,200 men. A number of nobles took part in the expedition. On this occasion Guadaloupe and Jamaica were discovered, and San Domingo and Cuba were explored. But the fabulous gold which the nobles expected was not forthcoming. Factions began, and ended in blood. Columbus vainly endeavoured to reanimate their enthusiasm. But they regarded him with disdain, and as the author of their misery. Columbus returned to Spain a second time, but he was not received with the same plaudits as before. The Spanish sovereigns received him with interest, though not without a little coolness. He found that a base and envious jealousy was springing up against him among the courtiers. Another expedition was, however, undertaken. Six large ships again carried Columbus and his followers to the New World. On this occasion the main land of America was discovered, and other islands in the Caribbean Sea. In the meantime, the natives of San Domingo rebelled against the Spaniards, who treated them with great cruelty. The Spanish colonists also fell out among themselves, and waged incessant war against each other. Columbus, in great sorrow at these events, despatched messages to the King of Spain, desiring him to send out to San Domingo a magistrate and a judge. At the instigation of some jealous and hostile members of the Court, the King sent out Don Francisco de Bobadillo, furnished with absolute powers, and designated Governor of the New World. He was not a judge, but an executioner. The first thing he did after landing was to throw Columbus and his two brothers into prison. He commissioned Alonzo de Villego to convey the brothers to Spain. Columbus was laden with chains like a malefactor, and put on board ship. While on the way Villego, compassionating the great navigator's lot, offered to relieve him of his irons. "No!" said Columbus; "I will preserve them as a memorial of the recompense due to my services." "These irons," said his son Fernand, "I have often seen suspended on the cabinet of my father, and he ordered that at his death they should be buried with him in his grave."

On the return of the ship to Spain, the King and Queen, ashamed



of the conduct of Bobadillo, ordered that the prisoners should be set at liberty. Columbus was disgusted with his treatment. "The world," he said, "has delivered me to a thousand conflicts, and I have resisted them all unto this day. I could not defend myself, neither with arms nor with prudence. With what barbarism have they treated me throughout." Yet his eager and mysteriously informed spirit was still brooding over the wide ocean. He obtained the means of making a fourth voyage, which, he thought, would eventually enrich Spain, a country which he had as yet so thanklessly served. This time he discovered the island of Guanaja. He coasted round Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. He landed at Veraguas, and found the rich mines of gold in these regions; he endeavoured to found a colony on the river Belen, but a tempest arising, his ships were blown hither and thither, and he was obliged to set sail for San Domingo, to repair his ships. He was now growing old, and worn out with fatigues and sufferings. He was sick and ill when his seamen mutinied, and threatened to take his life. He could not resist, for he had no one to help him. But suddenly the land came in sight, and he entered San Domingo in safety. Shortly after he set sail for Spain. It was his last voyage. He was now about seventy. After his "long wandering woe," he was glad to reach Spain at last. He hoped for some reward—at least for as much as would keep soul and body together. But his appeals were fruitless. He lived for a few months after his return, poor, lonely, and stricken with a mortal disease. Even towards his death he was a scarcely tolerated beggar. He had to complain that his frock had been taken and sold, that he had not a roof of his own, and lacked wherewithal to pay his tavern bill. It was then that with failing breath, he uttered the words, sublime in their touching simplicity, "I, a native of Genoa, discovered in the distant West the continent and isles of India." He expired at Valladolid, on the 20th of May, 1506, his last words being, "Lord, I deliver my soul into Thy hands." Thus died the great martyr of discovery. His defeat was victory. He struggled nobly and died faithfully.

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# Ministers Whom I Have Known.

(Continued from page 67.)



**W**HAT a marvellous faculty is memory, the power not only to retain all the mental impressions we have ever received, but to recall them, and sometimes, even without our own choice or effort. Perhaps more of our past life comes up to us without our endeavours than with them. All impressions made upon us seem to go down into the soul as vital seed into the soil; they may be buried there for weeks and months and years, and perhaps for ages, yet some flash of light or touch of dew or gas will wake them to life, and bring them into view. Instances have occurred in which the language of childhood, which has been buried for years, has come up to the old man in dying hours, and he has spoken it with wonted fluency. This faculty gathers up, so to speak, the fragments of our past life, so that nothing is lost, it compels us to re-live over and over again the years that are gone. These remarks are suggested by the fact that when I wrote my last paper on this subject, I considered that I had finished with it, and was not conscious that there were any other ministers whom I have known. Since that, some of the graves of memory have been opened, and a goodly number of the buried dead have appeared to my vision, and spoken to my heart.

There was *Rev. Dr. Morison*, late of Chelsea, for many years he was one of the most influential Nonconformist ministers in London, and, as Editor, conducted with great success, the "Evangelical Magazine." Under him, I understand, the circulation amounted to 20,000 a month. He was a man of fine presence, with a countenance as fresh as spring, and as open as the day. Although he was narrow in his theology, and preached the doctrine of a limited atonement, the gospel of universal love radiated in his noble countenance. There was a strange contradiction between his orthodoxy and his heart; the one would consign sinners to everlasting burning, the other would embrace the wicked world in the arms of universal love. I once heard it said of him that he was so orthodox that if God Himself was not orthodox in his view, he would not worship Him.

Once he reviewed a little work of mine, almost the first book I attempted, called the "Core of Creeds," in the pages of his journal, and wrote with vigorous severity concerning points in it which he considered it to be heterodox. But the next time I saw him he ran up to me and shook hands with all the glow and gush of tender fatherliness.

There was *Dr. Ferguson*, whom I knew well, and with whom, at one time, I had much friendly intercourse. He was first settled as a minister at Stratford, in Essex, then at St. John's Wood, and afterwards at Ryde, Isle of Wight, where he did good work, and was much respected. Afterwards he came to London, and embarked in a noble enterprise of philanthropy, viz., the raising of the sum of £100,000 for the relief of poor and disabled ministers. That enterprise grew out of a conversation which I had with him on a project which I had formed for the insurance of the lives of ministers by their congregations.\* I was anxious that his philanthropic purpose should work through the instrumentality of an insurance society, and I still think this would have been the better way. My plan was that the £100,000 should have been expended to insure minister's lives on the principle that the amount insured should be paid at their death, the period of their disablement, or at the age of sixty. In this way the recipient would deal with the office not as a crouching petitioner, but as an independent claimant. The best men, I believe, would rather starve than apply for help to any body of men or committee. This fund now is a golden chain that fastens many expectant recipients to the Congregational Union. Dr. Ferguson was a man of imposing presence, not less than six feet in height, and proportionately stout, with a countenance though not handsome, yet genial and pleasing, a man of superior endowments, natural and acquired. He wrote several volumes, amongst others "*Cassel's History of England*."

There was *Rev. Mr. Pigg, B.A.*, of Marlborough Chapel, Kent Road. He succeeded, with far greater success, the Rev. Henry Richards, now M.P. for Merthyr-Tydvil, who had laboured there for many years with but little encouragement. Mr. Pigg was a young man when he died, a man about the average height, of superior endowments, and a scholar withal. His sermons were of a very superior order, reminding one of the pulpit productions of Robertson, the

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\* For an explanation of this scheme see "*Homilist*," Vol. XLI, page 386.

famous Brighton preacher. The last time I think I saw him, was at a meeting of the Board of Congregational ministers. It was on the occasion when the question as to whether the Catholic Bishop Wiseman should be allowed to take the title of Cardinal. The whole country at that time was in hot excitement on that question. At this meeting nearly all were in favour of opposing the assumption of the title. I ventured to speak in opposition, laying down the principle that every religious communion in this country had a full right to carry out their organisations so long as they did not interfere with the rights of others. Mr. Pigg seconded my amendment—for it was an amendment to a resolution. Such was the tolerance of even the most liberal religionists—for Independent ministers are, I think, as a whole, the most liberal—that we were hissed down.

Immediately after this I understand Mr. Pigg wrote to the secretary resigning his seat on the Board. I continue to this day, though I have not attended six of their meetings for twenty-five years, not because I have any ill-feeling to a single member, but because I have found a way of spending my short time more agreeably to myself, and, I trust, more profitably to others. It will be remembered that in consequence of the agitation concerning Cardinal Wiseman, there was a law passed called the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, to prevent the title of Cardinal being used by any Roman Catholic in this country. The law was so absurd and so unjust that it has been long since repealed.

There was *Rev. J. Hill*, late minister of Clapham. We were neighbouring ministers for some years. We did not take much to each other. Constitutionally our mutual affinities were not strong. He was a man of middle height, not stout, somewhat cadaverous in appearance, with a priestistic face and voice. He had been a missionary in Calcutta, had treasured up a good many anecdotes, which he told with effect. His range of intellect was narrow, and his information meagre. He composed his discourses with great care and delivered them with what is called unction, and he was popular. There were then in connection with his congregation, a large number of those who had made fortunes in the city in sundry ways and divers manners—drapers, and grocers, and jobbers, not a few, men whose purses were full, but whose minds were empty. Such a ministry as Mr. Hill's pleased them immensely, there was



no tax on their thinking faculty, no prejudice wounded; the few religious dogmas that were always floating on the surface of their souls were echoed every Sunday in pleasant cadences. Mr. Hill seemed always anxious to please, especially his carriage people, often he used to speak of his "aristocratic congregation." On one occasion both of us went into Wales as a deputation for the London Missionary Society. We attended meetings in various villages and towns. We were to have been away a month, but before a fortnight I got disgusted with my mission. Not only was the repetition at every meeting of the same old anecdotes most wearying, but the way in which money was pressed out of my poor countrymen, who could scarcely keep body and soul together, seemed to me utterly repugnant to the magnanimous spirit of Christianity. In Haverfordwest, therefore, I left Mr. Hill. He urged me to continue, but I would not. We parted in a friendly spirit, but I seldom saw him afterwards. And I have never been deputation for the society since, though frequently requested.

There was *Rev. Mr. Soul*, minister of Battersea. He was amongst the first ministers whose acquaintance I made after I came to London. He attended my recognition services. He was for many years honorary Secretary to the Surrey Mission, and was brother-in-law to Mr. Tritton, the Banker. He was a thoughtful, refined, genial man, a man to whom I was greatly attached. The last time I saw him was, I think, when I preached at the anniversary of the opening of a beautiful chapel which he had built at Battersea. He was not an old man, and he seemed to me at that time to be in robust health; although there always seemed to be a shadow of sadness over his nature. Indeed, there is a chord of melancholy that vibrates with more or less force in all great natures. I like to sit by men who can sigh and speak in the minor key.

There was *Dr. Alliot*, for some time Independent minister at York Street Chapel, afterwards tutor at Plymouth College, and then at Cheshunt. I knew him well, we were very intimate. He was often in my house, we studied Hebrew together. He delivered one of the Congregational Lectures, the subject of which was "Psychology and the Bible." Before the lecture was delivered he submitted to me the whole MS., and honoured me by requesting my freest criticism, which I wrote in the margin. He was of somewhat diminutive appearance, and by no means commanding in aspect. His attain-



ments were considerable, he had metaphysical proclivities, but his logical faculty was predominant. He had a loving heart, but a most unfertile imagination. His vocabulary was so meagre that the same word was compelled to do work in almost every sentence. He loved his students, and they appreciated him.

(To be continued.)

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## The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

### SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

#### Zoology—Animal Life Emblematic.

It would appear extraordinary were we unaware of the insatiableness of analogy, that there is scarcely an emotion or peculiarity of character belonging to man, which has not its emblem among the inferior animals. But such is undoubtedly the fact, nature being never tired of publishing her ideas in a diversity of languages. In the *jay* we have the emblem of a petulant girl: the *magpie* has all the flippancy, the vanity, and the intrusion of an ignorant fop: *sheep*, *lambs*, *bulls*, *bears*, *foxes*, and *snakes*, are emblematic to a proverb.

Men of penetration and sagacity often find it expedient to appear blind; and then the wise in their own conceit fancy they are dull, and only half awake to what is going on. They do not perceive that it is but acting mentally in the same way that the *eagle*, the *owl*, *divers*, *sea-gulls*, and certain other birds continually do physically, viz., when they close the peculiar secondary eyelid, called the nictitating membrane, which, being transparent, allows the eyes to be shielded, though the lids are left open. Wise men see more

with their eyes shut than wise-acres are often able to perceive with their eyes wide open; a woman captivates a man immeasurably more by a certain discreetness in overlooking, than by always acknowledging herself, either in words or demeanour, fully conscious of what is before her. *Doves* and *pigeons*, again, from the remotest ages, have been regarded as emblems of conjugal love, because of their amiable and chaste behaviour one to another. It is remarked, however, by Blumenbach, that "as to the so highly prized fidelity and chastity of the turtle-dove, it presents nothing superior to other birds which lead the same mode of life."

With the *grasshopper* the idea of lively cheerfulness has been associated from the time of Anacreon at the least. The *cricket* is another emblem of cheerfulness, as prettily described by Cowper. With the name of the *nightingale*, on the other hand, the word melancholy is almost synonymous. But though celebrated as a melancholy bird by most poets, ancient as well as modern, especially by Sophocles and Virgil in old time, and by Shakspeare and Milton in our own age, the nightingale is in reality sorrowful only by

name. Some of the poets do actually refer to her as a cheerful bird, Chaucer, for instance. All the songs of birds are songs of gladness. "It is from association only that the nightingale derives her powers of disposing the heart to melancholy. Her notes, strong and sonorous, are cheerful and enlivening when heard by day, and seem pensive only when nature is lulled in repose, and our feelings are hushed to silence; when the sound of the wind among the trees, of distant bells, or of the music of running waters, touches the heart with nearly the same emotions as the notes of the bird herself.

Fidelity, patience, distrust, perverseness, cunning, cruelty, all the virtues and vices of our nature are similarly expressed in different animals, birds, or insects, the appropriate introduction of which as the substitute for written descriptions of character is not only in the highest degree historical, but often conveys the desired idea far more effectively. What a world of meaning is conveyed by the representation of an industrious people under the emblem of a *hive of bees*! What is more beautiful and instructive, and at the same time more simple, as an emblem than even a

single working bee as, loaded with honey yet never tired, it still "improves each shining hour?" Shakspeare, who left neither the depths of the heart nor the secrets of nature unexplored, compares a hive of bees to a free and well directed government.

"So work the honey bees,  
Creatures that, by a rule in nature,  
teach  
The act of order to a peopled kingdom.  
They have a king, and officers of sorts ;  
Where, some, like magistrates,  
correct at home ;  
Others, like merchants, venture trade  
abroad,  
Others, like soldiers, armed in their stings  
Make boot upon the summer's velvet buds,  
Which pillage they, with merry march, bring home  
To the tent royal of their Emperor,  
Who, busied in his majesty, surveys  
The singing masons building roofs  
of gold ;  
The civil citizens kneading up the  
honey ;

The poor mechanic porters crowding  
in  
Their heavy burdens at his narrow  
gate ;  
The sad-eyed justice with his surly  
hum  
Delivering o'er to executors pale  
The lazy yawning drone."

In this most beautiful and exact comparison Shakspeare, as would be naturally expected, was anticipated by Virgil, whose 4th Georgic (wherein the passage occurs) is wholly devoted to the history of bees and bee life. One of the Roman historians was equally struck by the analogy, and appositely remarks in the course of his illustration, that as nothing is good for one bee which is not equally good for every other inmate of the hive, so neither can anything be esteemed right or proper which favours certain individuals of a community at the expense of others."

LEO GRINDON.

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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### PUBLICATIONS OF "HAND AND HEART" OFFICE.

THE FIRESIDE ANNUAL, 1880. Conducted by REV. CHARLES BULLOCK, B.D.—This is a large and very handsome volume teeming with almost everything that can interest and instruct. For several years in the multiplicity of periodicals we had lost sight of this valuable work, and we are heartily glad to have it once more brought under our attention, and to find that it seems to grow strong and fruitful with age. The talented editor here shows his power by the large number of able writers he has gathered about him, and by the vast variety of useful subjects which he has selected for his readers. We have read two of the tales right through, namely, "Dorothy's Daughters" and "The Nameless Shadow," and they are the productions of genius of no mean order. They have not only a power to charm the imagination, but to excite and rightly direct the highest sensibilities of our nature. We have also read the "Criticisms on Hymns, Ancient and Modern," and thank the able writer for calling attention to the inanities and absurdities of our most popular hymn book. We consider many of the hymns in that book a disgrace to the poetry, theology, and piety of the age. Even in our best modern hymn books there is much that is objectionable and repulsive, both to our reason and conscience. St. Augustine has said a "hymn must praise, and prayer to God, and this in the form of song," and this is evidently the true canon, but the great bulk of compositions called hymns are not devout utterances to God, but statements about Him, and about men, and about all manner of things. The time has come for a thorough reformation in our hymnology. Most heartily do we commend this interesting magazine to our readers, and wish for it an ever-prospering life.—"HAND AND HEART," Parts I. and II., VOL. VI.—This is called the "Church Herald and Review," and is a weekly periodical crowded with

every variety of useful matter, also with numerous striking portraits and Illustrations.—**WHAT CHURCH ? AND THE ONLY FAITH AND FOLD.** By REV. C. BULLOCK, B.D. This work consists of five chapters, the subjects of which are, “The one Holy Catholic Church and Visible or Ecclesiastical Churches,” “First Ground of Protest against the Church of Rome,” “Second ground of Protest against the Church of Rome,” “Existing Circumstances and Perils of the Church of England,” and “The only Faith and Fold.” The book is controversial, and in this character it is a model, clear, succinct, and thoroughly liberal in spirit. The correspondence of the author with Archbishop Manning, though brief, defines very clearly the line of demarcation between the Roman Catholic Church and Protestant Churches. We cannot but regret that neither the author or the Archbishop brought into prominence the fact that the only saving faith is *in Christ*, and not in creeds. In the Gospel of St. John alone the expression in various forms “Believe on Me” occurs no less than thirty times. Faith in creeds divides men, faith in Christ will unite Christendom.—**POPULAR RECREATION.** By REV. C. BULLOCK, B.D. The subjects of this book are “The Attitude of the Church towards popular recreation and literature,” “The Church and the Stage,” &c. The little volume is an able attempt to arrest the growing desire manifested in some churchmen and even ecclesiastical authorities to encourage theatrical amusements. Some, indeed, would have the most sacred subjects put on the stage.

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**THE LAND AND THE BOOK: SOUTHERN PALESTINE AND JERUSALEM.**

By W. M. THOMSON, D.D. London: T. Nelson & Sons, Paternoster Row.

Here are Biblical illustrations drawn from the manners and customs, the scenes and scenery of the Holy Land, by one who has spent nearly half a century as a missionary in Syria and Palestine. The author says that on the scenes he has described he has gazed from mid-day to midnight in summer and winter with a joyous enthusiasm that never tired. His purpose here is to guide his reader, through that good land of mountain and vale, and lake and river, to the shepherd's tent, the peasant's hut, the palaces of kings, the hermit's cave, the temple of the gods—to the haunts of the living and the sepulchres of the dead—to muse on what has been, and converse with what is, and learn from all what they teach



concerning the oracles of God. On this subject this work has no superior, nay, no equal; it stands alone in unapproached excellence. Southern Palestine and Jerusalem are here brought under our eye in language clear and eloquent, and in pictorial illustrations striking and numerous. Of the latter it has no less than 140. Its table of contents involving seventeen long chapters, is laid out most distinctly and fully, though the subjects are very numerous. It gives, moreover, a very minute index of the names and subjects described, and also a full list of all the passages of Scripture illustrated. The paper and type are of the best quality, the illustrations the productions of the highest art, and the binding is exquisite. In this respect it is worthy of the famous house from which it is issued.

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THE FAMILY PRAYER AND SERMON BOOK. By VERY REV. C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D. In two Volumes. London: Strahan & Co.

Many books of this order have, from time to time, appeared, of varied sizes and merits, and to a large number of Christian families they are helps to Christian instruction and devotion. This is beyond comparison the best we have ever seen. The distinguished author is not only a man of high toned devotion, but one of our best Biblical scholars, and ablest Scripture expositors. With a prayer for every day in the year there is also a brief, enlightened, and spiritually exciting discourse, expounding and inculcating the vital principles of personal godliness. As to the prayers, so far as the spirit and composition are concerned, they also are superior to any we have seen. To write prayers is a work far more difficult than to write sermons. We have ourselves done more, perhaps, than any living man—in the latter department, but we are painfully conscious of a lack of the capacity for the former. There are many Nonconformists who object to written forms of prayer, and yet, forsooth, one has only to attend the same Nonconformist ministry for a few months, in order to feel oppressed with the monotony of phrase and subject of what are called extemporaneous prayers. Indeed, this monotony in the devotional parts of Nonconformist worship is a burden which, in many cases, becomes so intolerable as to lead to a neglect altogether of public worship. These two volumes are most elegantly “got up,” the paper, type, binding are unexceptionally excellent, and reflect the highest credit on the publisher’s artistic taste.

## PUBLICATIONS OF RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

THE LEISURE HOUR FOR 1880.—The purpose, plan, and spirit of the “Leisure Hour” are well known. It is an old friend that has now visited us for many years. It is old, however, only in a chronological, not in a constitutional, sense. As there are many people who are chronologically old, but constitutionally young, so with books. This volume, for example, is full of the freshness and poetry of youth. It is full of interesting anecdote, and story, it has scraps of science and theology, and abounds with illustrations. We have read the tale entitled “Nine-tenths of the Law,” right through, and with its incidents, purpose, spirit and style, we have been much charmed. It is far superior to most of the three-volume novels of the day, not only as a moral lesson, but as a work of art. Such a novel as this we should like to have introduced into every circulating library, and placed on every railway book stall in the kingdom. We heartily desire for this volume even a wider and more hearty welcome than its predecessors.—THE SUNDAY AT HOME FOR 1880.—This volume may be considered a brother of the former. It has the same parentage, family features, temper, and bearing. It talks on similar subjects, in a similar way, for a similar purpose. We would call special attention to the articles entitled “Incidents of a Journey round the World,” by Rev. W. Urwick, M.A. They are full of most interesting and useful information. Also the articles by Rev. Stanton Eardley, entitled, “Reminiscences of Italian Travel,” will repay perusal.—WHAT DO I BELIEVE? By DR. GREEN. The author of this work informs us that the chapters of which it is composed were written originally for Sunday-school teachers, and that their substance appeared some years ago in a work devoted to their service. It is well for every man to ask himself, “What do I believe?” and not adopt, but feel, his convictions. We care not for men’s traditional beliefs, but we do hail the independent convictions of every genuine student of theological truth.—CRITICAL HANDBOOK. By DR. MITCHELL. This is a work of intrinsic value. The plan of the book embraces, in the first place, a view of the present field of controversy on the subject of the Authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures, as regarded from a historical and geographical standpoint; in the presentation of which a leading object has been to familiarise the mind with the periods and the persons most often referred to in the after-

work of textual criticism. This is followed by a brief discussion of the leading points in the History of the Canon, and then by a *resume*, of the subject of Textual Criticism. This little volume is capable of rendering immense service to every Biblical student.—THE LAST FIRST. By REV. MACLEOD SYMINGTON, M.A. This little book contains a series of sketches on some of the less noted characters in Scripture history, such as Onesimus, Hagar, Abraham's steward, Jabez, Baruch, Pilate's wife, &c. The sketches are very fresh and suggestive.—VIGNETTES OF THE GREAT REVIVAL. By REV. PAXTON HOOD. The author begs that this volume shall not be read critically, therefore we shall not criticise. The substance of it appeared in the "*Sunday at Home*." We have here sketches and pictures also, of Augustus Toplady, John Wesley, Philip Doddridge, William Grimshaw, Robert Raikes, William Carey, George Whitfield, and others of less note.—THE SCRIPTURE POCKET BOOK. Also THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S POCKET BOOK FOR 1881. These are amongst the most useful Pocket Books and Almanacs that make their appearance amongst us during the year.

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THE UNIVERSAL INSTRUCTOR, OR SELF CULTURE. Parts I, II, and III. London: Ward, Lock & Co.

Here is the advent of another teacher for England, one that promises to do its work as well as any extant, and in some respects more thoroughly than any now at work. We will give it the opportunity of speaking for itself. "It aims at nothing short of being a university at home, and in every way to suit such students as, hampered by slender means or prevented by the inconveniences of distance, or of time, are unable personally to attend any of our great seats of learning." It purposes to cover the whole field of knowledge from the most elementary to the most advanced, and thus form a perfect system of intellectual culture. It comprises Geography, Geology, Geometry, German, Grammar, Greek, History, Latin, Logarithms, Logic, Magnetism, Mechanics, Mensuration, Meteorology, Mineralogy, Music, Navigation, Painting, Penmanship, Perspective, Physics, Physiology, Short-hand, Spanish, Steam-Engine, Surveying, Trigonometry, Algebra, Anatomy, Architecture, Arithmetic, Astronomy, Biography, Book-keeping, Botany, Chemistry. These are the first parts, and there is a splendid map of the world and a chronological chart, &c. We shall be pleased to call the attention of our readers to the parts as they appear.




## Leading Homily.

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THOMAS CARLYLE.—THE FALLEN CEDAR.

“HOWL FIR TREE, FOR THE CEDAR IS FALLEN.” *Zech.* xi. 2.

O the old Hebrew seer society appears in emblem and in sadness. In *emblem*. It is a forest with trees of various types: the “oak,” the “cedar,” and the “fir.” Whilst all men have a common origin, a common nature, common responsibilities, and a common mortal destiny, yet in every generation there is a great variety of type. There is the “oak,” the “cedar,” and the “fir-tree,” or the cypress. Vast is the distinction between men of the highest mould and the lowest. In the great forest of every generation there are a few tall cedars, and gnarled oaks, rising in majesty above all the other trees, down to brushwood and stunted shrub; intellectual giants and dwarfs, moral monarchs and spiritual serfs. No two minds are exactly alike, either in the nature, or the measure of faculty. This variety serves to check pride in the highest, and despondency in the lowest. The “cedar” has no

cause to boast, nor the "fir-tree" to complain, both owe their existence to the same God, and are sustained by the same common elements. Of what have the Shakespeares, the Schillers, the Miltons, the Dantes to be proud, since their distinguished endowments are the free gifts of heaven? This vast variety is suited, and no doubt intended, to strengthen the ties of human brotherhood. Were all men of equal capacity, would there be any scope for that mutual ministry of interdependence which tends to weld men together in social unity? There is the giver and the receiver, the delight of the former is in his gifts, and the hope of the latter is in the help he receives. The strong rejoices in bearing the infirmities of the weak, and the weak by gratitude gets bound to the strong. Not only does society appear to the old Hebrew seer in emblem, but in *sadness* also. "Howl fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen." If the "cedar" is fallen, let the "fir-tree" take the alarm. There is one event that awaits men of every class and grade, the tallest cedar and the most stunted shrub. "All flesh is grass." Death levels all distinctions. The cedar and the fir-tree, if not cut down by the woodman, scathed by the lightning, or uprooted by the tempest, must sooner or later, rot into common clay. Surely this common calamity should have a spiritualising influence on our lives. Since our connection with the material world is transient, and with the spiritual enduring, why should we live to the flesh, and thus materialise our natures? To see the pinions of the noble eagle, made to pierce the clouds and bask in sunny azure, buried in mud would be a truly lamentable sight, but far more sad to see a human soul made to revel in the infinite, submerged in the gross and the sensual.



No doubt the fallen "cedar" here points to the departure of some great man of the age.

THOMAS CARLYLE was, by universal consent, a "cedar" in the forest of his age, towering high intellectually above most, if not all. During the last thirty-five years no man has risen comparable to him in the world of letters. In literature he has reigned with an undisputed and an unequalled sway. It is not my intention to sketch his biography: all the journals of England have done this, and no doubt some competent hand will soon be employed to portray him in a form enduring and complete. Nor is it my intent to enumerate, classify, or criticise his manifold and mighty productions. Certain features of his character have impressed me not a little, and to these I would give and direct, on this occasion, a rapid glance.

I would mark his *seclusiveness*. His life seemed to be strangely and sublimely solitary. It has been said that the smaller a man is intellectually, the stronger his craving for popularity, and the more anxious he is to make a conspicuous figure, and to play a prominent part in the theatre of public life, oratorising on platforms, and hungering for the cheers of listeners. My own experience, I confess, confirms this. In almost every society the small men push themselves into prominence. But Carlyle eschewed all such manifestations. He was seldom seen on platforms; a few lectures he delivered to select audiences at the outset of his London life, and then ceased all public manifestations. Writing to De Quincey he says: "*I have no society, but who has in the true sense of the word? I have never had any worth speaking of since I came into the world.*" His seclusiveness did not arise from

the lack of sympathy with mankind. He was neither cynic or misanthrope. No man ever wept over human sorrow with a deeper or more genuine benevolence. Against the political tyrants, commercial exactors, religious impostors, and all who brought misery on the millions of the starving and oppressed, he hurled his most terrible fulminations. But his seclusion arose partly from the lack of intellectual and moral affinities with the men of his age. He occupied an elevation which placed him beyond the reach of the great majority that lived down in the valley of traditional thought and shallow sentiment. He heard their mutterings, but his ethereal cadences pierced not their dull ears; they understood him not, "seeing, they saw not, hearing, they heard not." But he understood them, and because of this he recoiled with ineffable disgust, from their shams, their swindlings, their dishonesties, their intolerances, and their nameless sensualities. The great mass of the national mind appeared to him as a seething ocean of depravities of all kinds. In truth, a man of his intellectual and moral type must always be more or less lonely. But not only might his exclusiveness have arisen from the lack of intellectual and moral affinities with the men of his age, but from the necessity of his mission. His solitude was that of the seer and the student. Great as was his mind naturally, would he have reached the eminence he did, and have achieved his brilliant triumphs, had he not lived and wrought in solitude? Where did Moses get that strength which enabled him to pluck the iron rod from the grasp of Pharaoh? In the deep solitudes of Horeb. Where did John the Baptist gain that invincible power, that heroic courage, which enabled him to thunder

repentance into the ear of a wicked and perverse generation? In some hushed spot in a lonely wilderness. Where did Paul gain that marvellous power by which he made kings tremble, and "turned the world upside down?" Somewhere in the deserts of Arabia. It is beneath the earth's green mantle, in secret and silence amongst the roots, that the trees of the forest turn the elements of nature to their own advantage. And it is only down in the quiet deeps of spiritual realities, alone with God, that the soul can get that intellectual and moral strength that qualifies it for noble deeds.

I would mark his *penetration*. He has been called a seer, and truly so. He had that *spirit-sense* which recognises the shadowiness of the seen, and the substantialities of the invisible. On one occasion he says, "*Thy true beginning and Father is in heaven, whom with the bodily eye thou shalt never behold, but only with the spiritual.*" How keen and wide his vision! The primary elements of character, the moral laws of the universe, the eternal principles that produce and govern all phenomena, seemed ever clear to his glance. And these to him were the realities—all else shadows and sounds. To him the great man was the man whose life conformed to the principles of rectitude and truth, and who did some honest work in life. "*Two men,*" he says, "*I reverence, the toil-worn craftsman that conquers the earth and makes it man's; venerable to me is the hard hand, crooked and coarse wherein lies much cunning. The second man I honour, even more highly, is he who toils for the spiritually indispensable, not daily bread, but the Bread of Life.*" Men lacking rectitude of heart, though wielding the eloquence of a Demos-

thenes, possessing the wealth of a Croesus, or the dominion of a Cæsar, he denounced as shams. With what grim scorn he talks of the "*babbling of Parliaments*," the "*braying of Exeter Hall*," as sanctioned by "*the crowd of amiable simpletons sunk in the deep froth-oceans of benevolence*."

I would mark again his *indefatigableness*. Having conscientiously relinquished the idea of the Christian ministry as a profession, and accepting that of a "*writer of books*," as he calls himself, with what unwearying, unfailing persistency he pursued his mission for a long series of years! Discouragements he had, and they were many and varied. He had publishers who, as Dr. Johnson said, "fatten on the brains of authors," who disparaged and rejected his mss.; he had religious journals which denounced his productions as atheistic and blasphemous; critics, too, he had of that pretentious, dilettante type, who held up his style to popular ridicule and scorn. Yet with an invincibility of soul he paused not to notice one word of his detractors. He closed his ears to their babblings, and heeded them no more than a whiff of smoke. Like a lonely star he moved through his orbit, neither heeding the roaring tempest or the battling clouds. Nor was he more affected by the praise of men than by their blame. Honours and brilliant titles were offered him, but he counted them baubles.

He was inspired with the feeling of his countryman, Burns, who sang—

" You see yon birkie called a lord,  
Who struts and stares and all that,  
Though hundreds worship at his word  
He's but a fool for all that.  
The man of independent mind  
Looks and laughs at all that,"

A striking indication of his indefatigableness in labour occurs in connection with the lost MS. of the "French Revolution," the production of which had cost him many years of hard labour. He lent it to Mr. John Stuart Mill, the famous logician and political economist. Mr. Mill handed it to Mrs. Taylor—who was afterwards his wife. Mrs. Taylor left it on the table, from which her servant took it to light the fire. Carlyle, when he heard the news, was like a man staggered by a heavy blow. He set to work to rewrite the book, but could not pen a line. "*At length as I sat by the window,*" he says, "*half-hearted and dejected, my eye wandered along over acres of roofs. I saw a man standing upon a scaffold engaged in building a wall—the wall of a house. With his trowel he would lay a great splash of mortar upon the last layer, and then brick after brick would be deposited on this, striking each with the butt of his trowel, as if to give it his benediction and farewell: and all the while singing or whistling as blithe as a lark. So I arose and washed my face, and felt that my head was anointed, and gave myself to relaxation—to what they call light literature. I read nothing but novels for weeks. I was surrounded by heaps of rubbish and chaff. I read all the novels of that person who was once a Captain in the Royal Navy, and an extraordinary ornament he must have been to it. The man that wrote stories about dogs that had their tails cut off, and about people in search of their father, and it seemed to me that of all the extraordinary dunces that had figured upon this planet, he must certainly bear the palm from every one, save the readers of his books. And thus refreshed I took heart of grace again, applied me to my work, and in the*



*course of time, the 'French Revolution' got finished, as all things must, sooner or later."*

I would mark also his *generosity*. A great intellect is generally wedded to a great and generous heart. Real genius cannot live in the polar regions of selfishness; it can only live, and grow, and work, in the sunny breezes of benevolent impulses. Some have spoken of Carlyle as if he lacked all generous sympathy for mankind, and this, because at sundry times he has spoken hard words concerning the Ethiopian race, and denounced without mercy the lazy louts and lords, the parasites sucking the blood of the working population; and because he has advocated a despotic government. But they forget the kind of despot that he would put on the throne; it was only the greatest man in the community, and no other. The King he wanted was one who had more brain, conscience, experience, heart, intelligence, than any other man in the kingdom. And what thoughtful man would not advocate the same kind of rule? The combined judgment of thirty millions of men would be of less value than the judgment of the man who was greater than any of them. Such a man would occupy a point of vision which the others could not reach, and would, therefore, have materials for a judgment of which the thirty million would be deprived. His words are, "*One man that has a higher wisdom, a hitherto unknown spiritual truth in him, is stronger not than ten men that have it not, or than ten thousand, but than all men that have it not.*" The curse of England is the sending to Parliament men to make our laws, the majority of whom are intellectually and morally inferior men—men who spend the time of the nation in what Carlyle would

call "babblings." It is very true that there would be no possibility of putting the greatest man on the throne by the suffrage of the people, for the people would be too small to appreciate such a man, therefore Mr. Carlyle would not reject the strong hand of coercion.

But did he not always sympathise with the people? He denounced the corn-laws, the game-laws, and the taxes on knowledge, and all the other things that kept the people down in poverty and distress. Almost the last public act he performed was to express his sympathy with the people against imperial tyrants. He signed his name to a protest against the desecration of Westminster Abbey by setting up therein a monument to the Prince Imperial, and thus thwarted Dean Stanley, and the wishes of all the worshippers of little royalties. One instance of his generosity came within my own observation. Some years ago when I was delivering a course of lectures at Stockwell (now published in a book called the "Philosophy of Happiness"), I made an admiring reference to some of the grand sentiments of Carlyle. There was a young woman present, not, I presume, more than twenty years of age, a little tradesman's daughter, of an unusual amount of intellectual vivacity, who was tempted by my reference to procure one of the works of Mr. Carlyle. Having read the book she became so filled and fired with the wonderful thoughts, that she resolved to write at once to the author to give him some idea of the impression he had made upon her mind. Having posted the letter, she trembled at her presumption, and deeply regretted the act. Next morning there came to her humble dwelling a lady who alighted from her brougham, knocked at the door, and asked of

the little maid if Miss —— lived there? She said “That is my name, ma’am.” The lady said, “Did you write to Tom?” “Do you mean Mr. Carlyle?” “Yes.” The poor girl trembled and said, “I hope I have not done wrong.” “No,” was the reply, “he was greatly pleased with your letter, and he has sent me to invite you to spend an evening with us.” After great pressure the invitation was accepted. This led to a frequent and lasting correspondence, and Mr. Carlyle presented her with a life ticket for the London Institution. This must have occurred about fifteen years ago or more. A few months since she appeared one Sunday evening in the Augustine Church, and spoke to me. I asked her if she still visited Mr. Carlyle, and she said, “Frequently.” Who but a great man would have noticed a poor girl like this, simply on intellectual grounds? The epitaph which he wrote on his wife reveals something of the depth and the tenderness of his great heart:—“*In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common, but also a soft invincibility, a capacity of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart which are rare. For forty years she was the true and loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him, as none else could, in all of worth that he did or attempted. She died in London, 21st April, 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life is gone out.*”

I mark, too, his *reverence*. The man who can take the widest glance at the universe, and whose mind moves amongst the higher sublimities of existence, one would expect to be under the spell of a sobering awe. Thinkers and writers of the smaller type may be volatile and flippant, but the great never. “An undevout astrono-

mer is mad." He was undoubtedly a profoundly religious man, religious not always in the church, chapel, or conventional sense of the word, but in the sense of "loving mercy, doing justly, and walking humbly with his God." "*The universe*," he says, "*is not dead and demoniacal, a charnal-house with spectres: but God-like and my Father's.*" Some twelve years ago he wrote a letter to his friend, Mr. Erskine, in which he uses these words: "*'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy will be done,' what else can we say? The other night, in my sleepless tossings about, which were growing more and more miserable, those words—that brief and grand prayer, came strangely into my mind, with an altogether new emphasis, as if written and shining for me in mild pure splendour, on the black bosom of the night there, when I, as it were, read them word by word, with a sudden check to my imperfect wanderings, with a sudden softness of composure which was much unexpected. Not for perhaps thirty or forty years had I once formally repeated that prayer; nay, I never felt before how intensely the voice of man's soul it is: the inmost aspiration of all that is high and pious in human nature; right worthy to be recommended with an 'After this manner pray ye.'*" An instance came under my own notice revealing his faith in Christ. A few years ago, it will be remembered, very serious charges were brought against a firm of bankers in the City of London. The members of the firm were all church-goers, and by profession very religious men; for years the firm stood high in the estimation of the mercantile world. It was during the trial of these men which was then proceeding in Guildhall, that a clergyman—a friend of the late highly revered Rev. F. D. Maurice—was a guest of mine. One evening he went by invitation to spend a few hours with Thomas Carlyle at

Chelsea. On his return he told me many striking things that Carlyle had said to him. Amongst them was this, "*What a sad thing those preachers are making of that character !*" The expression broke out so suddenly and unconnectedly that at first my friend did not understand him, and asked, "What character do you mean, Sir?" The answer was, "*I mean Christ. These men now at the bar of Justice were all church-goes ; if their parsons, instead of reiterating in their ears their own little dogmas and speculations and sentimentalities, Sunday after Sunday, had flashed that character upon their consciences, they could not have been guilty of the charges.*" Could anything be grander and truer than this? And did not this express his unbounded confidence in Him who is the great Hope of mankind?

I mark also his *suggestiveness*. The highest order of mind is the suggestive. His was marvellously so : even sentences and paragraphs which by reason of his strange phraseology you could not easily understand, would seldom fail to start a train of thought ; every sentence is as the wand of an enchanter. Like a gust on the still lake it wakes ripples of thought upon the dull mind. His words, like the mystic rod of Moses, smite even stoney minds and bring out streams of thought unexpected and unknown. Sir William Hamilton, Maurice, Froude, Robertson of Brighton, Emerson, Kingsley, and perhaps every literary man of the higher order throughout Christendom, felt the magic of his stimulating touch. How many young men have I known who have looked and spoken, and acted, as if intoxicated with his great thoughts! All this stimulating power arose in a great measure from his strong originality, not only in conception but in utterance. There was nothing stale in thought, or conventional in phrase. The ideas that came from him came



not as through a channel, but as the wellings up of a fountain ever rising, sparkling, and fathomless. His language flowed not as a placid river, but as a foaming, dashing cataract from the towering craggy rocks. How many have attempted to copy his style who could never reach his thoughts! Their little heads have nodded like Jupiter, but instead of hurling thunder-bolts they only scattered pebbles. His strange diction, his grim humour, his scathing invective, his furious denunciation of shame everywhere, his electric flashes, his quivering pathos, are all his own, and are all charged with a strange mental stimulus.

Such is the man who has quitted our scene, the "cedar" that has fallen, and we may do well to "howl." Yet he has not gone, he is not, as one newspaper has said, "a great light gone out," his mind will flame on through coming generations. The residence has tumbled down, but the tenant lives; the harp is wrecked, but the lyrist lives with an ever swelling melody in his great soul. He lives in his own personal consciousness somewhere in the universe; for is it not all but inconceivable that whilst every grain of dust is indestructible, a soul like his shall go out in black extinction? In this he believed, for said he, "*I look with longings for the future life, where we and our beloved ones shall meet and be together again. Amen and Amen.*"

But whilst he lives in personal consciousness somewhere in the universe, he lives here in ten thousand forms, in the volumes he has written, and in the men he has re-created and inspired. No man had stronger faith in good books than he. "*Of all priesthoods, aristocracies, governments, at present extant in the world, there is none comparable to the priesthood of the writer of books.*" Stump orators, popular preachers of plati-

tudes, for those he had no word but a scathing scorn and withering contempt. A book is a second incarnation of the author, a body more enduring than the fleshy one, and far more accessible, too. Many might have desired access to Carlyle in his house at Chelsea, who could not gain it, but now he can visit every house where invited, and talk, and reason, and laugh, rebuke and comfort with unabated force. He has left his mind here and all worldly possessions are contemptible compared with the possession of the mind of a great man. What Hazlitt said of Coleridge is true of him, "He cast a stone into the pool of contemporary thought, and the circles have grown wider and wider." And so they will until the day of doom.

"The words of fire that from his pen  
Were flung upon the fervid page,  
Still move, still shake the hearts of men,  
Amid a cold and coward age.

"His love of truth too warm, too strong,  
For hope or fear to chain or chill,  
His hate of tyranny and wrong  
Burn in the breasts he kindled still."

Why do I hold up to your notice to-night this great man, who has just quitted this mundane scene? Is it as a perfect model? No, not in any sense. Not in a *literary* sense. You cannot imitate his thinking, for few are gifted with the power to think as he thought; and as to his style, to imitate this, would make you as absurd as a dwarf in the robes of a giant-king. His style to him was natural; strange as it was, it was the native dress of his wonderful thoughts. "No style," says Festus, "is good, but nature's style." Nor do I hold him up as a perfect model in a *political* or a *moral* sense. There is no man perfect, either in wisdom or

in character. Of all the men who have appeared on this earth, and that figure in history there is only One to be regarded as a perfect example. He who delivered the Sermon upon the Mount, and gave Himself to restore the race to the knowledge, the friendship, the image, the enjoyment of the common Father of us all, He is the only perfect exemplar. Before His great soul the greatest minds of all ages are dwarfed into insignificance. Before His majestic character the greatest patriots, philanthropists, saints—whose names are emblazoned in history and sung in verse—are as dross to gold. To follow Him is the sum of our obligation, and the guarantee of our perfection. Let us all follow Him then !

Adieu, great sage and seer, adieu ! Right manfully and mightily has thy herculean intellect wrestled with the shams, the quackeries, jobberies, dishonesties, impostures, cupidities, carnalities, and other devils in the Parliaments, the churches, and the literatures of thine age. Thou hast won the benedictions of all honest men, and posterity will bless thy name.

“ Not to thine eternal resting place  
 Shalt thou retire alone, nor could'st thou wish  
 Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down  
 With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,  
 The powerful of the earth, the wise, the good,  
 Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,  
 All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills  
 Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun, the vales  
 Stretching in pensive quietness between ;  
 The venerable woods ; rivers that move  
 In majesty, and the complaining brooks  
 That make the meadows green ; and poured round all  
 Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste  
 Are but the solemn decorations all  
 Of the great tomb of man.”

*Bryant*

# *The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.*

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## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

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**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELIM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

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No. CLIV.

“**HOLD NOT THY PEACE, O GOD OF MY PRAISE.**” *Ps. cix.* 1-31.

“*Mysterious*,” says Dr. Hammond, in his exposition of this production, “was the one word written at the side of this Psalm, in the pocket book of a late devout and popular writer.” But why “mysterious?” Not because of its phraseology, that is plain enough, nor because of its vindictive spirit, for that is common enough, and experienced more or less by all, but simply because of the theological views through which it is surveyed. The student who regards it as the composition of a perfectly good man, or of a divinely inspired man,

or of a man who is a type of Christ, cannot fail to be overwhelmed with its mysteriousness, perplexity, and confusion. But he who takes it for what it professes to be, the production of a man, who, though he has much goodness in him, has also a great deal of evil passion and sentiment, and who often loses his temper, and is carried away by vindictive passion, will find it plain enough.

It is not my purpose to treat this Psalm as I have all the preceding one's—expound its phrases and verses, and draw, therefrom, homiletical truths, nor is it my purpose to propound some theory of interpretation either old or new, but simply, in the most condensed way, to propound two or three facts which many expositors of this Psalm have ignored, and which should be always kept clearly in view by every one who would understand it.

I. THIS PSALM IS IN PERFECT ACCORD WITH DAVID'S CHARACTER AS POURTRAYED IN SCRIPTURE.

First : Its spirit of revenge is in accord with many of his *other utterances*. The imprecations which we have here, we find him breathing out on other occasions and in other places. Thus in Ps. v. 10, "Destroy thou them, O God, let them fall by their own counsels : cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions." In Ps. x. 15 we have this utterance, "Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man : seek out his wickedness till thou find none." In Ps. xviii. 40-42, we have these words, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me." In Ps. xxxiii. 4 we have this language, "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours, give them after the



work of their hands." In Ps. xxxv. 4-8 we have this savage utterance, "Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt. Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angel of the Lord chase them, let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them, for without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul. Let destruction come upon him at unawares, and let his net that he hath hid, catch himself, into that very destruction let him fall." In Ps. xl. 14-15 he thus breaks forth in vengeance, "Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it: let them be driven backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame." In Ps. lv. 9 he thus exclaims, "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues." In Ps. lviii. 6-10 he thus breaks out into a ruthless rage. "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth, break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be cut as in pieces. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them melt away." In Ps. lix. 13-15 we have another terrible specimen of his vindictiveness. "Consume them in wrath, consume them that they may not be: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the earth. And at evening let them return, and let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city. Let them wander up and down for meat and grudge if they be not satisfied." In Ps. lxxviii. 2 these words occur, "As smoke is driven away so drive them

away: as wax melteth before the fire so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." In Ps. lxi. 22-25 we have the awful imprecations, "Let their table become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not, and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them, let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents." These are mere specimens, but they are enough to show that in spirit they all agree with the Psalm before us. There is no difficulty about it, we need not endeavour to ascribe it to any one else, it is the utterance of David, and agrees with his conduct (2 Sam. xii. 30, 31).

Secondly: Its spirit of revenge is in accord with his *character*. Incalculable injury has been, and is being, done to the cause of truth by representing David as a pre-eminently good man. The expression which occurs in 1. Sam. xiii. 14, "The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart," men have interpreted as meaning that David's character was in accordance with the heart of God, but such an interpretation is an insult to Infinite holiness. How could one who was guilty of cruelties, falsehoods, adulteries, murders, be in character in accord with God's heart? The expression, "after His own heart" does not refer to David's character at all, but to his office, as the clause following declares. "The Lord hath commanded him to be a captain over his people." The expression "after His own heart" does not mean after His own approval, but after His own *counsel*, that is, God's own counsel. When these words were uttered, David was not born, and the

Almighty afterwards used him as he used Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, &c., “after His own heart,” after the counsel of His own will, that is, to do His work.\* No, no, David was far from being a perfect man. Without recalling all his crimes, involving unrighteous laws, and falsehoods, and treacheries, and adulteries—for he established a harem—we will refer to one, and that one reveals a state of soul far enough from being in accord with the heart of God; in fact, concerning it, it is said the “thing that David had done displeased the Lord,” I mean his conduct in relation to Uriah, as given in 2 Sam. xi. If you analyse that narrative, what do you find? A cluster of sins, which could only be produced by a tree more or less corrupt. In the language of Dr. Blaikie, “First there was the crime of adultery, including as it always does, the sin of robbery, and constituting according to the criminal laws of the Jews a capital offence, the punishment of which for both parties was death. Secondly, attempted deception in the efforts used by the king to prevent it being known what he had done. Thirdly, tempting Uriah to drunkenness—braving the curse afterwards denounced by the prophet—“Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness.” Fourthly, ingratitude and injustice to Uriah, in his cruel return to that brave and self-sacrificing man for his noble services in the cause of the king. Fifthly, meanness and treachery—it was mean to take advantage of Uriah’s absence in the first instance: it was mean to attempt through him to conceal his crime; it was

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\* See “Homilist,” Vol. xliii., page 196.

mean to try to intoxicate him, and it was incredibly mean to make him the bearer of a letter detailing a plot for his death. Sixthly, commanding another person (Joab) to do an unjust and atrocious action. And, seventhly, the crowning sin of murder—slightly masked, no doubt, but in substance and spirit, cold-blooded, deliberate murder. Then as to the aggravations of these sins. These, too, were numerous and strong. First, all this was done by the king of the nation, who was bound not only to be an example to his people in general, but especially to discountenance crime, and to encourage and reward bravery in his service. Secondly, the singular goodness of God to David was another great aggravation; rescued from all his enemies, placed by God upon the throne, surrounded with every species of lawful enjoyment, such guilty concupiscence was utterly without excuse. Thirdly, the very profession made by David, and for the most part so consistently—his reputation as a good and holy man made his offences the greater—inducing those whom he made use of for his guilty plots to reason, that there could be no great harm in doing what so good a man desired—overcoming their scruples, perhaps, by that very consideration. Fourthly, the mature and almost advanced age which he had now attained, he being long past the boundary of youth, and therefore the more inexcusable in giving way to youthful lusts. And, fifthly, the example of Uriah—so eminent a pattern of faithfulness to his duty as a soldier, of firm and unconquerable aversion even to lawful indulgences that might indispose him for the hardships of a soldier's life, or be unsuitable in the comrade of brave, self-denying men."

The goodness of David has been awfully exaggerated by evangelical preachers, religious authors, and conventional saints. He has been regarded not only as the chief of all saints, but even as the type of Christ. He is held up as a model for imitation and his compositions, even the most profane and blasphemous of them, are chanted in churches and chapels. But it is asked, Was he not a man "after God's own heart?" Yes, in the sense to which I have referred, but in no other. God treats all men according to the counsels of His own will, puts them up or sets them down. Did David not show a magnanimous spirit towards Saul? Yes, and in two or three other instances he seemed to act in a generous way, and what bad man is not at times the subject of good feeling? Did he not compose some most beautiful hymns and prayers? Yes, so did Burns, and Dryden, and Byron, and Moore. Some of the worst men I have known are men who composed prayers and made religious verses. A man of genius and whose devotional element is stronger than the ethical, will always have, more or less, the inclination, the aptitude, and the gratification for such creations. Did he not suggest and promote the building of the temple of God? Yes, but many men in every age, not distinguished for goodness, originate churches and chapels,—brewers are proverbially great in this work. I do not deny the existence of virtue in this man, nor would I depreciate it. All I say is, that whatever the amount of good, there was in him a large amount of evil.

Now if you take this Psalm as the utterance of an imperfect man, a man subject to some of our worst passions, there is no difficulty in interpreting it; it is



a bad thing produced by a man—a good man, if you will—in a bad temper. It has as much religion in it as the prayer of “*Holy Willie*,” by Robert Burns; in sooth, it is like it in many respects, and one is as easy of interpretation as the other. One, and perhaps the chief reason, why expositors have sought to justify David’s vindictiveness is, because it takes the form of prayer to Almighty God, often in language grand and solemn. But to me, I confess, this makes his spirit all the more fiendish; instead of having the courage to crush his enemies himself, he cowardly and profanely asked the great common Father of humanity to do so. What can be worse than to invoke heaven to enable us to gratify our most fiendish passions? The next fact to be observed by all who would look rightly on this composition is—

II. THIS PSALM THUS AGREEING WITH THE KNOWN CHARACTER OF DAVID RENDERS ANY ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN AWAY ITS NATURAL SENSE UNREAL AND UNNECESSARY. Here it is, you may not like it, you may regret its publication, but it accords with much in the character of its author, and you are bound to interpret it accordingly. It is sad to see the many methods that Biblical expositors have adopted in order to explain away the literal and natural meaning of this Psalm; none like it, but all strive to justify it. Some by endeavouring to show that it *accords with the spirit of the Old Testament*. They say that the spirit of revenge or retaliation was not so immoral in the old dispensation as it is in the new. This is not true. What is wrong at one time, is wrong in all times, and the Old Testament inculcates love, mercy, forgiveness, in language as clear and strong as does the New. The following are but a few ex-

amples—"If thou meet thine enemy's ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him" (Exod. xxiii. 4, 5). "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth" (Prov. xxiv. 17). "If thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty give him water to drink. For thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord shall reward thee" (Prov. xxv. 21, 22). The law of love belongs to all dispensations, it is the law of the universe, it is the law of nature. "If I rejoiced," says Job, "at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him. Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to his soul" (xxx. 29, 30). No, the Old Testament affords no justification of this language at all, the revengeful spirit is essentially immoral. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." Some try to justify it by endeavouring to show that the *objects of the author's imprecations were spiritual foes*, that is, foes to goodness, truth, holiness, God. This is manifestly untrue; and were it true, the language would be equally reprehensible. Some try to justify it by endeavouring to show that it is the *language of prediction*. They say the author is by the inspiration of prophecy foretelling what must happen under a righteous government to all the enemies of God. Grammar will not allow you to take all the sentences as predictive, and there is no proof that David spoke under divine inspiration. No man is inspired who utters things of questionable morality. Some try to justify it by endeavouring to show that David here speaks as a

*type of Christ*, and that the enemy on whom he invokes vengeance is Judas. But it is horrible blasphemy to regard David in this case as a type of Him who, when "He was reviled, reviled not again," and who died praying for His enemies. Some try to justify the language on *the ground that David was a magistrate*, and that, as such, he was bound to punish criminals, and that there is nothing more wrong in the spirit of this Psalm than in the spirit of government detectives seeking out criminals, in judges pronouncing the sentence of death on the guilty. We may ask is it not wrong for any man, in any capacity, to seek the destruction of his fellow-man? If it is wrong for man in his individual capacity to take away the life of his fellow-man, it is equally wrong as king, judge, soldier, or executioner. Some try to justify it by endeavouring to show that the imprecatory language is not the language of David in relation to his enemies, but *the language of some one else in relation to David*—the language of Shimei, and by inserting the word "saying," at the beginning of verse 6, and regarding subsequent expressions as imprecations of Shimei on David, all difficulties will be removed. This is the view of Dr. Hammond in Vol. II. of the "*Expositor*." \*

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\* "It has been suggested," says Dr. Barry, "that the second section does not contain David's imprecation against his enemy, but his enemy's imprecation against him, and should therefore be introduced by the word '*saying*,' being in truth a long quotation. But tempting as this suggestion is, and not improbable in itself, as well as supported by considerable authority, it cannot be reconciled with St. Peter's reference to one of these imprecations in Acts i. The natural, if not the necessary, conclusion from Peter's words is that it is David who is speaking, and that he is speaking concerning Judas, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

But all these attempts to justify the language are not only unreal, but unnecessary. The language wants no justification, but condemnation ; the expressions are the utterances of a man in a bad state of mind, and they should be denounced without mercy. Methinks the author himself would not justify them, but would condemn them as soon as they escaped his lips. You may as well endeavour to justify the horrid imprecations of Shimei as to justify these malignant invocations. I quote the words without any explanation, for they are plain enough to be understood, and scarcely require any alteration in the translation, although I will present them in the version of Delitzsch.

*Set thou a wicked man over him,  
And let Satan stand at his right hand.  
If he is judged let him come off as a wicked man,  
And let his prayer become sin.  
Let his days be few.  
His office let another take.  
Let his children become orphans,  
And his wife a widow.  
And let his children wander to and fro, begging,  
And let them entreat far from their ruins.  
Let the creditor surround with snare all that he hath,  
And let strangers spoil what his labour hath gained.  
Let there be no one to continue kindness to him,  
And let no one bestow (anything) upon his orphans.  
Let his posterity be rooted out.  
In the next generation let their name be blotted out.  
Let the guilt of his fathers be remembered with Jahve  
And let the sin of his mother not be blotted out.  
Let them always be before Jahve,  
And may he cut off their memory from the earth.*

Another fact to be borne in mind in studying this Psalm is—

III. THAT IT IS THE RULE OF BIBLICAL HISTORIANS TO RECORD THE BAD AS WELL AS THE GOOD IN A MAN'S LIFE AND UTTERANCES. The Biblical historian gives the defects of men as well as their virtues, conceals nothing. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot, Joseph, Moses—good men and great, as some of them were—had their defects, and the historian chronicles their faults, does not conceal them, excuse them, or palliate, but reveals them in all their hideous deformity. Hence it is that it gives us only *One perfect Man*, simply because no other has ever existed. The Bible gives us the virtues of men to imitate, records their crimes as warnings. This being so, why should we attempt to justify the bad as recorded in the Bible, whether it be in deed or speech? Faithful Biblical students should take the bad and hold it up as a beacon, to flash its red light athwart our path, pointing out the foes and dangers that beset us.

CONCLUSION :—Two subjects of thought are suggested.

First.—*That good and evil may co-exist in the same human soul.* In this very Psalm there seems to be a co-mingling of good and evil. There is vengeance towards man, and there is reverence and thankfulness towards God. In David the religious element was stronger than the ethical, and vice and virtue held their place, and played their part within him. Good and evil are, in different measures, found in the best man on earth. In the spirits of heaven there is good, and good only; in hell evil, and evil only; in those of earth they co-exist in different degrees. “The web,” says Shakspere, “of our life is of mingled yarn, good and bad together.” The recognition of this fact



## HOMILETIC SKETCHES

is important in estimating the character of our fellow men. A man is not to be pronounced utterly bad because he has fallen into wrong, nor completely good because he has performed some virtuous deeds. As the earth grows helmlock as well as corn, the human soul germinates the vile as well as the virtuous. "There is not a just man on earth that doeth good and sinneth not." The other subject of thought suggested is—

Secondly :—*That the use of such psalms in Christian worship is most unwarrantable and mischievous.* In Episcopal churches these psalms are periodically read, and often chanted. Yes, and in some of the modern Nonconformist churches they are sung as hymns of Christian devotion. Men who set themselves up as authorities in the psalmody of Dissenters, and who publish their chant-books, appropriate not a few of David's most objectionable compositions. Where is the warrant for this, and who can measure the amount of its mischievous influence? F. G. Hebbard (author of "*Psalms Chronologically Arranged*"), speaking of this Psalm, relates the following circumstance—"I cannot forbear recording the following little incident that occurred the other morning at family worship. I happened to be reading one of the imprecatory Psalms (but why read such a Psalm in family worship?) and as I paused to remark, my little boy, a lad of ten years, asked, with some earnestness, 'Father, do you think it right for a good man to pray for the destruction of his enemies like that?' and at the same time referred me to Christ as praying for His enemies." The question of this boy was most natural, and such a question all in Christian congregations who are unsophisticated, unprejudiced, and thoughtful—alas! how few—

can scarcely fail to ask. Who can tell the numbers who recoil with horror from churches and chapels where they have heard such things chanted, and instead of returning, denounce Christianity altogether? Surely it is time to put an end to this. Shall I interpret Christ by the Old Testament, or by the Epistles of the New? Nay, I interpret both by Him. I will not bring the rushlight in aid of the sun. He Himself has said, "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son he hath revealed him." Hence whatever I find either in the Old Testament or in the Epistles of the New, that is at variance with His Spirit, I am bound, if not to reject, to hold in abeyance. Christ must, in all things, in all hymns, in all sermons, in all ordinances, have the "pre-eminence." His Spirit of spotless morality, elevated devotion, compassionate, forgiving, self-sacrificing, unconquerable love, must reign in all. He is my Bible.

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**THE TONGUE.**—No mortal has a right to wag his tongue, much less to wag his pen, without saying something; he knows not what mischief he does, past computation, scattering words without meaning, to afflict the whole world yet before they cease! For thistledown flies abroad on all winds and airs of wind; idle thistles, idle dandelions, and other idle products of nature or the human mind, propagate themselves in that way, like to cover the face of the earth. Did not man's indignant providence, with reap-hook, with rake, with autumnal steel and tinder intervene? It is frightful to think how every idle volume flies abroad like an idle globular downbeard, embryo of new millions, every word of it a potential seed of infinite new downbeards and volumes; for the mind of man is voracious, is ferocious, germinative above all things, of the downbeard species.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Vestcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### No. CXX.

#### The Relation of Christ to the Intellectual Perplexities of His Disciples.

"A LITTLE WHILE AND YE SHALL NOT SEE ME," &c. (John xvi. 16-24).

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 16. — "*A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me.*"—The two expressions "*see me*" here are from two different Greek words, the former from a word signifying seeing either by the bodily or mental eye, the latter signifying mere bodily sight. Hence Dr. Davidson translates thus: "A little while and ye behold me no longer, and again a little while and ye will see me." He here points either to His departure from them by death and His return forty days after His resurrection, or to His departure from them at His ascension, and His return to them at the Pentecost, at their death, or

at the final judgment. Probably the reference is to the Pentecost and His appearing in the Paraclete, for it is of this advent the whole context speaks. The expression "*little while*" does not settle which, but, "*one day to Him is as a thousand years,*" &c. "*Because I go to the Father.*" "The majority of the better MSS. omit these words at this place. They have probably been inserted here from the end of next verse."

Ver. 17. "*Then (therefore) said some of His disciples among themselves what is this that he saith unto us?*" &c. They did not understand Him, they were perplexed.

Ver. 19. "*Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him,*

and said unto them, *Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said?*" &c. "Jesus here gives them a last proof of His superior knowledge, not only by showing them that He was conscious of the questions which were engrossing their thoughts, but also by solving in this last conversation all the enigmas by which they were tortured."—*Godet*.

Ver. 20. "*Verily verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament.*" These last two words represent the intense grief of the Apostles between His crucifixion and resurrection. "*But the world shall rejoice.*" While they were weeping the Jewish world was rejoicing. When they saw Him fastened in the grave they thought He was finally crushed and their triumph was complete. "*Your sorrow shall be turned unto joy.*" Not only shall your sorrow be followed by joy, but it shall itself be transformed into joy.

Ver. 21. "*A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come.*" "The Greek is more exactly 'the woman hath pangs'—that is, the woman in the well-known illustration. This figure was of

frequent use in the prophets. (Comp. Isa. xxi. 3; xxvi. 17-18, and especially lxvi. 7-8; Jer. iv. 31; xxii. 23; xxx. 6; Hos. xiii. 13-14; Mic. iv. 9-10.) "*That a man is born into the world.*" The word is the wider word for human being. The thought is of the joy of maternity swallowing up the pangs of child birth. These cease to exist, but that continues, she forgets the one in the fulness of the other." *H. W. Watkins, M.A.*

Ver. 22. "*And ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*" Elsewhere we are told that at His appearing to them after His resurrection the "disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." How joyous, too, were they after His Pentecostal appearance in the Paraclete. "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved" (Acts. ii. 46, 47).

Ver. 23. "*And in that day.*"

This seems in all probability to refer to the whole period of the Spirit's dispensation commencing with the Pentecost. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you whatsoever ye shall ask the Father.*" "Whatever" must, of course, have its limitations. Nothing, of course, that would involve an alteration in the established laws of nature or the purpose of God will be given. "*In*

*my name.*" In my spirit and purpose.

Ver. 24. "*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name.*"

"They had not up to this time received the Holy Spirit. When He came He was as the presence of Christ dwelling in them. Under His influence their will became the will of Christ, and their thoughts the thoughts of Christ, and their prayers the prayers of Christ."

HOMILETICS:—The passage leads us to consider the *relation of Christ to the intellectual perplexities of His disciples*. They did not understand what He meant by the reference to His departure and return, "*in a little while.*" The passage suggests three remarks—

I. Christ FREQUENTLY OCCASIONS the perplexity of His disciples. He did so now, "*What is this that He saith?*" "Seven times does the phrase "*a little while*" occur in these chapters, and at this point their query is specially fixed upon that clause, but not that clause only. They take His last expressions by piecemeal and toss them from one to another. They would be glad to know, but dare not interrogate the Lord."

Christ often, by His symbolical and enigmatical language, threw His hearers into intellectual perplexity. Thus, when He speaks of moral redemption as a new birth, Nicodemus says, "How can these things be"? Thus, when He speaks of His death and resurrection as the destruction and rebuilding of the temple, His hearers considered He meant literally the destruction and re-



building of the temple at Jerusalem in three days. When He speaks of His absolute necessity for human souls, in the figure of eating His flesh, and drinking His blood, His hearers said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" But the examples are too numerous to quote. Constantly did our Saviour throw His hearers and His disciples into intellectual perplexity. He puzzled them. This must have been intentional. We can see good reasons for this. First: It would serve to *impress them with their ignorance*. It is scarcely conceivable that any could have heard him without being impressed with the greatness of His intellect and the affluence of His knowledge; and the hearing, therefore, of utterances from Him that baffled their understanding could scarcely fail to impress them with their ignorance, and the first step to knowledge is a consciousness of ignorance. Secondly: It would serve to *stimulate their thoughts*. It would break the monotony of their minds, set them thinking, urge them to inquiry. The great object of His teaching was to educate His hearers, and difficulties are essential to educational work. The schoolbook that is mastered by the pupil ceases to be educational, and becomes obsolete. There never lived a teacher so potent in stirring the mental faculties into vigorous action as Jesus of Nazareth. He broke the monotony of mind and set the wheels of thought agoing. Almost every word of His roused inquiries, and His answers to the inquiries constituted a very large portion of His public ministry. The passage suggests—

II. Christ is ALWAYS ACQUAINTED with the intellectual perplexities of His disciples. "*Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them. Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said?*"

Christ "knew what was in man." Before they spoke He knew their doubts and difficulties. Nay, we are told that He knew from the beginning who they were that should betray Him. No other teacher ever showed, or ever had, such a thorough acquaintance, with the unspoken thoughts that coursed through the mind of their hearers. Indeed, so frequently are they ignorant that they often infer that where there is scepticism, there is faith, where there is impiety, there is religion. Not so with Christ, no hearer ever deceived Him, for all souls are more open to Him than the tropical seas are to the beams of the sun. This fact should have two effects upon us. First: It should encourage us to search the Scriptures. The difficulties we have in endeavouring to understand the writings of the great authors of antiquity are not known to them, when we ponder perplexed over their utterances, nor have they the power to help us in our difficulties. Not so with Christ. He not only knows our difficulties in studying His word, but is ready if we ask Him, to yield a satisfactory solution. Secondly: It should urge us to cultivate sincerity in our thoughts. For us to profess to know things of which we are ignorant, to believe in things of which we are sceptical is to insult His Omniscience. Our prayer should be, "Teach me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." The passage suggests—

III. CHRIST WILL FURNISH A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION of the intellectual perplexities of His disciples IF DESIRED. "*Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him.*" And because they were "*desirous*" He here gives a full explanation. In His explanation concerning

His departure and return, He states three things—First: That His departure would involve them in great sorrow, whilst the world would be rejoicing. “*Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.*” Who can tell what poignant agony they endured when they saw Him on the Cross, and heard His expiring groans, and saw Him conveyed to the grave? On His way to the Cross, we are told, “there followed Him, a great company of people, and of women which also bewailed and lamented Him.” Do you want to know—as if Christ had said—what I mean by the “*little while, and ye shall not see me?*” I tell you in order to prepare you that that period will be a time of sore distress for you, “*ye shall weep and lament.*” You will soon know all about it, from bitter experience. The event is just at hand. Yes, you will indeed “*lament,*” even while the world is rejoicing. My enemies will revel in unholy delight when they know that death has done its work on Me. He states, Secondly: That His return will turn their sorrow into high rejoicing. He indicates here two or three things concerning their joy at His return. (1) It will be intensified by their previous distress. “*A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.*” The anguish of the mother is lost in the rapture she feels when she presses to her bosom the new-born babe. So it will be with all the sorrows and trials of the good man on earth, they will be lost and forgotten in the celestial felicities of the future. (2) It will be beyond the power of man to take away. “*Your joy no man taketh from you.*” It will

be in them as “a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.” A man may take away your property, your health, your life, but your joy never. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.” (3) It will be associated with the power of obtaining all spiritual blessings from the Father. “*In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name He will give it you.*” “That day,” that long day beginning with the Pentecost, running on through all the ages of redeeming spirits. With the Spirit working in you, you shall obtain from the great Father the primal Source of all goodness, whatever you shall require.

Thus Christ, without going minutely into particulars concerning His departure and return, states facts abundantly sufficient to set their souls at rest.

CONCLUSION. If we are genuine disciples of the Holy Christ we shall have a full and satisfactory solution of all our perplexities and difficulties one day. What we know not now, we shall know hereafter. Wait a little.

“A little while, and ye again shall see Me,”

Surely thou tarriest long,  
Bridegroom beloved ! When shall the night of weeping  
Be turned to song ?

With heaven so far beyond us  
And earth so near to lure us and beguile  
How long ? Oh ! Thou didst promise to tarry,  
“A little while.”

“A little while” the whole creation waits Thee  
In hope and fear ;

Surely the sound of that swift driven chariot  
At length I hear.

O earth ! earth ! earth ! rouse thee !  
Wake from thy tears, put on thy glory smile !  
Surely He cometh : and He will but tarry

“A little while.”

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### THE STRONG AIDED BY THE WEAK.

“I THANK MY GOD,” &c. *Phil.* i. 3-8.



IT is usual for us to speak of the commanding and elevating influence of great minds and devout hearts upon feeblar minds and upon hearts less powerfully affected by the things of God ; but this exquisite passage reveals the influence of unknown men and women upon the spiritual life of the chief of the apostles. It brings before us a too-much forgotten fact. Great minds do not dwell in an inaccessible region, like “stars apart,” and draw smaller natures after them by very force ; they are the most intimately near to every other kind of nature ; they are many-sided, inclusive, catholic. A poet dwells with all beautiful things, and they with him. He is touched and influenced by the opening of a flower, by the flash of a sunbeam, by the dying of a bird, by the tear of a child, by the dress of a pauper, by the struggle of a seamstress to win her daily bread ; and also by the schemes of the statesman, by the birth-throes of nations, by the achievements of science, by the daring of the world’s pioneers. Insensibility to the influence of other natures is a sign of littleness and poverty of soul, not of greatness and wealth. Paul in prison is yet among men, observing their conduct, responding to their affection, reposing in their steadfastness of faith,



thanking God for their largeness of heart. As the barometer hidden in our houses responds to the atmospheric changes that are going on outside, so the sensitive, catholic-hearted apostle of the Gentiles is affected in prison by all that is going on among the churches. From the church at Philippi come influences as soft and balmy as the south wind, and his soul is glad in the sunshine and hails the spring.

Let me ask you to notice : (I) How the brethren of this church EXCITED AND STIMULATED HIS GRATITUDE TO GOD. He says, "I thank my God upon every mention of you." Merely to hear or to speak of them stirred his soul, and made him bless his God. Wonderful cause for thanksgiving this ! Other people's goodness ! He had seen a good deal of people's badness : he had had stripes above measure ; often had he been in prison (in this very Philippi he had suffered both stripes and imprisonment) ; he had been face to face with death once and again ; he had been stoned ; he had been in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen ; in perils, too, among *false brethren*. And if anything can close the heart against mankind, if anything can make it suspicious, hard, self-contained, bitter, cynical, it is the treachery and betrayal of false brethren. After the enduring of wrong at their hands, it is not much to be wondered at, though it is profoundly to be regretted, if the injured man learns to dwell more on the bad qualities of men than on their good qualities, and if he is always snapping and snarling at the church and at the world, if the words [cant, hypocrisy, hollowness, deceit, come freely to his lips. Yet Paul had gone through all this, and his heart was as pure and loving as a child's. The

bitter acid of resentment had not eaten one mark of corrosion into the bright surface of his spirit. Instead of fretting his soul with the recollection of wrongs done him, and brooding in his own heart in a deeper darkness than that of his prison house, he comes out into the sweet, warm sunshine of the love, and generosity, and thoughtfulness, and faith, and devotion of all the saints at Philippi, and gives God thanks for such a people. "*All* the saints at Philippi?" Yes, "*all*," and yet very likely all were not equally noble; some, no doubt, had been slower in action, colder in love, feebler in faith, more unstable in profession than the elect of the church, but with a true Christian instinct, guided by the loving spirit of that God who for ten righteous men would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah, he sees "*all the saints*" in the light of the best of them, and gives God thanks for all. It is a beautiful and significant fact that we have here, the generally noble character of the church imparting itself to every member, and a man in prison feeling happy because some believers whom he knows are so holy and so worthy of the gospel.

Thus was the apostle enlarged in their enlargement, and exalted in their exaltation. And thus do we learn that we all are either a weight on each other to depress each other, or an inspiration in each other to gratitude and to holiness. Happy is the man of whom his true-hearted brother in Christ says, "I thank my God on every mention of you."

II. THE SAINTS AT PHILIPPI ADDED TO THE APOSTLE'S PRAYERS THE ELEMENT OF JOY. "Whenever I pray for you," he says, and the words he uses imply that he prayed for them very often, "I make request for you

with *joy*." True prayer may be in widely different moods—in depression, or in confidence. Intercession may be exercised in great darkness and anxiety of soul, or in great joy and with abounding hope, as if we had already received for our friends and brethren the things that we prayed for. There is an importunity for others which is born of their needs; and there is an enlargement and liberty in prayer, a joyfulness, which is born of the knowledge that you and those for whom you pray are in deep spiritual sympathy; that your asking and theirs harmonise and unite, and go up before the throne of God in the power of a SACRED AND PREVAILING AGREEMENT. "If two of you agree as touching ANYTHING that ye shall ask in my name, it shall be done unto you of my Father in heaven." We are strengthened and encouraged by like-mindedness and sympathy. It is easy to pray for some people, and for some churches. It is most difficult, almost impossible, to pray for others. The very air of some meetings lends wings to your faith and desires; while over other meetings it is as if the cloud of God were stretched, and your prayer could not pass through. All your askings seem to come back to your own heart.

Now what is the cause of that? It cannot lie in the character of God; for the worse any person is, the more worldly and unbelieving any church is, the more is God's blessing needed; and He delights in mercy; He is always calling upon the backslider to return to Him, and upon the wicked man to forsake his ways, and upon the lukewarm professor of religion to repent, and do his first works, and return to his first love. It cannot, then, be that our prayers are hindered by anything in God. And yet we cannot overlook the fact, for fact I

take it to be, that there is in some cases a time of weary and depressing waiting, before our prayers seem to take effect. No token of improvement is visible in the person for whom we intercede ; the church we have taken upon our heart, and which we should be rejoiced to see responding to the call—" Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee "—that church is as cold and as formal in its spirit as ever, it is as worldly in its methods and as far from Christ as ever. Now while this season lasts, we should encourage ourselves by remembering that God may be setting forces in motion which will gradually prepare the way for a full and perhaps sudden answer to our prayers ; I say sudden answer, but in truth He has been answering us in every step that led up to the manifest change, as well as in the manifest change itself. He is answering the parent's prayer for a rebellious child, when He weaves around that child, out of its very follies and sins, a chain of iron circumstances against which it will dash itself in vain ; and then, when it feels the grip of God's almightiness and the terror of His judgments, it will begin to think upon its ways and be wise. In every pain that pierces the wanderer's soul, in every twinge of conscience, in every sigh after the bright days that are gone for ever, in every pinch of hunger, in every averted face that He would fain have look upon Him and recognise Him, God is answering prayer, and the full manifestation of His gracious, though apparently slow, working is seen when the prodigal says—" I will arise, and go to my father." But how sad are the days of pleading, while he is yet in a far country ! With what a weary heart, with what a depressed spirit, with what tears and sighs is the

throne of grace sought day after day, while he continues hard and unrepentant. And then what joy there is in asking good things for him when you know that he is in sympathy with you, that he longs for them, that he will prize them, and that you have in his salvation a signal and glorious evidence that God will not forget your prayer !

And the same influences are felt in praying for Christians and for churches. To ask for anything for the humble, the believing, the pure, the generous, the prayerful, the zealous is to ask with glad confidence, for they, and we, and the Father, are of one mind. There is no hardness or coldness to pray against. Let each of us ask himself whether his taste and relish for spiritual things is so strong and so apparent that when his praying brethren pray for him, they always make their request with joy. It is a marvellous thing to be an inspiration to prayer ; it is a sad thing to be a hindrance.

And then again, I think we should ask ourselves whether we sufficiently employ this precious privilege of praying for one another. Suppose any of us had access to a person of great resources, a person of wealth and rank and power to advance our interests and the interests of our friends ; suppose we could go to him whenever we liked to do so ; suppose we were at liberty to ask for things for ourselves and for others ; and suppose his nature was so kind, and so open, and so generous, that it was a real pleasure to him to comply with every wise and right request, should we not feel that our friends ought to be the better for our privilege ? Should we not, indeed, be in danger of an officious vanity in introducing our friends to the notice



of our patron? At any rate a kind man would be sure to see that he did not stand alone in his advantage; and he might even go as far as John Howe, who was for some time chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, and of whom, though he did not sympathise with Cromwell, he was wont to ask things for other people, but never anything for himself. So conspicuous was this self abnegation, that Cromwell once said, "You ask of me for other people, but why do you never ask for yourself?" But I fear God might more frequently say,— "You ask for yourself; why do you not let others share your gifts? Why is it all for self?"

It is a high place in the Christian life when we can ask for others with *joy*! when their spiritual sympathies are so keen, and our love is so large as to make this possible.

III. THEY WERE HIS HELPERS IN THE GOSPEL. He speaks (verse 5) of a fellowship with them in the gospel from the first day until now. He says (verse 7), "In my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel ye all are partakers with me of grace;" *you* have grace as I have, both to suffer and to toil for the gospel. The remembrance and recognition of the grace which they had received and manifested was a stimulus to his own heart again. There is a general character and there are particular services which he can call to mind, and upon which he can only dwell with pleasure and thankfulness. The two points are worth notice.

First: There is a general character in relation to the gospel, a general tone and bearing and influence towards it, which he remembers with joy. I presume this was composed, so to say, of many things, of trifles, each of which had its weight, of words and actions, of

mere manner and influence and attitude. I gather from his language that the gospel had always been precious to them, and its propagation a thing of importance in their eyes. And they had always deputed themselves as believers who lived under this conviction. They had sympathised with the apostle in his love of the good news of God, and in his intense desires to preach amongst the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, the mystery that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. Now simply to know that he had their sympathy was an encouragement; as simply to know that you have not a man's sympathy, is, so far as he is concerned, the greatest discouragement. Active aid is not always necessary to the sustentation of the work of God; active opposition is not always necessary to the hindering of it. Here we have an apostle, the boldest and most resolute of men, gladly remembering the fellowship towards the gospel of a number of humble men and women, every one of whom, I doubt not, revered him as an invincible champion of the faith. Ah, they little thought until he told them of it, how greatly their whole bearing and spirit had encouraged him; and so perhaps we little think how we are all along, either helping or hindering the gospel by either encouraging or discouraging those whose work it is to preach it. It may be a little thing that they should be affected in their minds either one way or the other; but it is not a little thing if that creates the power or occasions the feebleness with which they preach Christ.

Believe me, my friends, your interest or indifference has a great deal to do with the spirit in which the truth of God is proclaimed to you, and that again tells upon the success of the truth.

Second : Besides the general attitude and bearing of the Philippians, the apostle recalls special services done for him as a preacher. They had ministered to him in his bonds, they had stood by him in preaching and confirming the gospel. Now I shall not at present speak of the nature of their gifts, as the subject will come up again ; I only want you to observe that all that was done for *him* was ultimately done for the *gospel*, because it cheered and sustained him who was the preacher and defender of the gospel, and now a prisoner for its sake.

The practical lesson from this part of our subject seems to be, that, however powerful and useful a minister may be, his church can indefinitely increase his power by sympathy, by prayer, and by co-operation. Ministers know best how true that is ; some because they lack their church's aid, others because they enjoy it.

IV. The saints at Philippi also formed the deep conviction in the apostle's mind that God would FINISH IN THEIR HEARTS THE GOOD WORK WHICH HE HAD BEGUN IN THEM. He declared that he was confident it would be so, and that it was only just of him to think this of them all. This expression of thought and hope has been made the battle ground where Arminian and Calvinist have stoutly and obstinately fought over the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints ; but I have not the slightest wish to break a lance in that fray. For I am quite out of sympathy with these contentions.

It matters everything to me that words like these should be taken for a safe platform of action and work ; and as such the apostle intended them to be taken. He never meant them to minister to pride or to indulgence of the flesh : he never meant any one to believe that because God had bestowed some grace upon him therefore he was sure to enter through the gates into the city, even if he were to the end of his days to live in sin. The words themselves refute such an idea, for they say that, "He that hath begun a *good* work in you will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ," but if a man lives in sin, where is the *good work* of God in him ?

All such perversions come of not rightly seeing what Christ came into the world to do—to save sinners, to save them *from* sin.

How refreshing is Paul's confidence for his brethren, when you put yourself in his place. He looks with glad gratitude upon what his brethren are and upon what they have done ; and then he asks himself whether all this is to be as fading beauty, whether the ardour of this zeal will cool, whether the boldness of this confession will be struck with the palsy of fear, whether this loving devotion will become estranged, whether this noble help will be withdrawn ? And he answers, "No, it never can be. God *began* this good work *in* them, for the good works done without are only the fruit of the good work done by God within them ; and He who of His great love, and because He is rich in mercy did this, will not forsake the work of His own hands, but will finish it until the day of Jesus Christ. Besides, I have you all in my heart ; the bonds which bind us together are spiritual ; you are part of

myself; I can no more think that you will be unfaithful to Christ, that you will cast off the beginning of your confidence, that you will turn aside to the beggarly elements of the world, than that I will. My very heart would have to be torn out of me, before that could come to pass. It is only just and meet for me to think this of you all; and I will not think less hopefully of any of you." There is the logic of love and faith in that passage. Your love sometimes tells you some bad things never can be, and that some good things must be. You feel that the moral order of the universe would suffer a tremendous shock if your confidence were confounded; nay, you will not have it that your confidence ever can be put to shame. God must be untrue, all love and sacrifice and service must be a delusion, before you can believe that some good men whom you know will ever forsake Christ. Very helpful is this faith. Very comforting is it to think of some whose ultimate salvation you feel is inevitably secure. Yes, and very sad it is to recall others of whom you can only say, "I stand in doubt of you." Perhaps if you could read your pastor's thoughts about you, you might therein read your future destiny.

V. The last advantage to the apostle of knowing these saints that I shall notice is, that THEY INTENSIFIED HIS CHRISTIAN BROTHERLY LOVE. "God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." Some people quicken brotherly love; others drown it. Mark, I say, brotherly love, the love of Christian sympathy and Christian confidence. There is an affection which has nothing of these qualities in it, such as I can suppose the apostle feeling for a doubtful professor of the faith; but here the whole heart



goes out in sympathy, without restraint of any kind. The apostle was great in brotherly love; the Philippians were great in being worthy of it, in inciting it, in calling it forth. Theirs was the glory of quickening and evoking the noblest feelings of a noble nature. With some people you are at your worst, with others at your best. We constitute an atmosphere for each other, and according to its temperature do we close or expand, as flowers in sunshine or shade. So stimulating had these saints been to the love of Paul that it was as if the tender yearnings, the mighty longings of the heart of Christ heaved in his soul. Greater benefit than this none can bring to us, that we should dwell in Christ, and Christ should dwell in us.

*Streatham Hill.*

J. P. GLEDSTONE.

MISTRUST.—The world is an old woman, that mistakes any gilt farthing for a gold coin; whereby, being often cheated, she will henceforth trust nothing but the common copper.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

EDUCATION.—An educated man stands, as it were, in the midst of a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man's skill has been able to devise, from the earliest time; and he works accordingly, with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is *his* state, who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed, or remain for ever shut against him! His means are the commonest and rudest; the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam engine may remove mountains; but no dwarf will hew them down with the pickaxe, and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

# Germes of Thought.

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## THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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### Future Retribution, the Receiving Back in Eternity the Deeds of Time.

"THAT EVERY ONE MAY RECEIVE THE THINGS DONE IN HIS BODY." 2 COR. V. 10.

WE detach these words from the context, for reasons that will hereafter appear. In this and the two preceding verses the Apostle seems to be giving the *philosophy of his courage* in the prospect of death. "*Therefore we are always confident,*" or *courageous*, as it should have been rendered. His courage seemed to be based on: First: A consciousness that death would not destroy the *personality of his existence*. "*Whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.*" Death he speaks of as a mere change of residence and costume.

Secondly: A consciousness that death would not frustrate the *grand purpose* of his existence. "*Therefore we labour that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.*" Purpose is that which gives a conscious value to a man's life. When a man's purpose is gone life is valueless. All the purposes of an unregenerate man terminate at the grave, hence to him death is terrible, whereas the grand purpose of a godly man runs on through all ages, it is to be "*accepted of Him.*" Thirdly: A consciousness that death would not break the *continuity* of his existence. "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of*

*Christ."* After having passed through the article of death and the coldness of the grave we remain : "*we must all appear before the judgment seat.*" Magnificent reasons, these, for undaunted courage in the face of dissolution.\*

Now the truth which I draw from these words, and on which I desire to fasten earnest attention, is that *retribution is the receiving back in eternity*

*the deeds of time.* It is not here said that we shall receive the *penalties* or the *rewards* of the deeds done in the body, but we shall "*receive the things,*" the deeds themselves. If there be penal suffering, the penal suffering or gracious rewards will be found in the "*deeds*" of life that will be received in that retributive period.

"*Every one may receive the things done.*" We offer three remarks

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\* "The image of Christ on the judgment seat is the same as that in Rom: xiv. 10 (where however in the best M.S.S. it is the "seat of God"), and the expression is peculiar to these two passages, being taken from the tribunal of the Roman magistrate, as the most august representative of justice which the world then exhibited. The "*Bema*" was a lofty seat raised on an elevated platform, usually at the end of the Basilica, so that the figure of the judge must have been seen towering above the crowd which thronged the long nave of the building. So sacred and solemn did this seat and the platform appear in the eyes, not only of the heathen, but of the Christian society of the Roman Empire, that when two centu-

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ries later, the Basilica became the model of the Christian place of worship, the name of *Bema*, or tribunal, was transferred to the chair of the Bishop, and this chair occupied in the apse the place of the judgment seat of the prætor. In classical Greek the word *Bema* was applied not to the judgment seat, which did not exist in Grecian states, but to the stone pulpit of the orator. In the Septuagint it is used twice for a pulpit (Neh. viii. 4; 2 Mac. xiii. 26). Elsewhere, as in Acts vii. 5, for a step. In the New Testament (with the exception of Acts) it is always used for a judgment seat. The more usual figure for the judgment is a throne." *Dean Stanley.*

concerning these "*things done.*"

I. They will come back FROM THE EVER-WIDENING REGIONS OF MEMORY. Every deed that a man performs in this life becomes permanently registered in his consciousness. In every conscious deed there is a deathless life, a life which while it often hibernates in memory, will one day spring to light. Memory is a mighty cemetery, millions of forgotten deeds lie slumbering there, but in the morning of retribution all the graves will open and the buried dead will start to life. This is the most terrible of all resurrections. Or to change the figure, memory is like a field, the morning after the husbandman has raked in his seed and buried it out of sight, there it lies unseen for many days, but each grain has life in it, and the vernal sunbeam and shower shall wake it up and bring it into sight

and strength. So the sun of retribution will bring out of the fields of memory deeds that have long been buried out of view. Memory is like the coal-fields, they are the grave of a thousand suns ; kindle them into flame and every buried ray of light will flash out in brilliant force.

"And slight withal may be the things which bring  
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling  
Aside for ever: it may be a sound,  
A tone of music, summer's eve, or spring,  
A flower, the wind, the ocean, which shall wound,  
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound,  
And how, and why, we know not, nor can trace  
Home to its clouds this lightning of the wind,  
But feel the shock renewed, nor can efface  
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind."

BYRON.

We offer another remark concerning these "*things done* :"—

II. They will come back IN ALL THEIR COMPLETENESS. First: They will be com-

plete in their *number*. "*The things done in his body.*" What a comprehensive phrase is this of human deeds. All the things that have been done *by* the body, words spoken, actions wrought, were acted *in* the body first unseen, whilst countless actions have been wrought *in* the body that have never been outwardly enacted. In the soul's arena, which is ever widening, and into which no eye but that of God can penetrate, all our moral deeds are enacted. There hosts of falsehoods have been forged that have never sounded from the tongue, robberies have been committed where no fraction has ever been extracted from any purse or home, murders committed, where no blow has ever been struck, or poison administered. The things done *in* the body make up our conscious life. Who shall count the number of

these things done in the body every day? Then multiply those by all the days of a man's life, and before he reaches his three score years and ten they shall be as the stars of heaven, and the sands on the sea-shore in number. We shall "*receive all these things done in the body,*" they will come back, not one lost, on the morn of the resurrection. Secondly: They will be complete in their *character* "*Whether it be good or bad.*" The bad will not come back as the good, or the good as the bad, the moral character of the deed will remain. "*Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.*" Bad deeds are the seeds of misery, out of them come all hells. Good deeds are the seeds of blessedness, out of them come the Paradises of the moral universe. Another remark we offer concerning these "*things done*" is:



III. They will come back in all their **RIGHTEOUS TENDENCIES**. First : Righteous tendency as to *experience*. Neither good or bad actions here produce in man's experience their legitimate results. A bad action does not fully produce the misery that in justice belongs to it. There are so many influences in this beautiful world to counteract its tendency. Mercy in a thousand forms in this life strives against the tendency of sin to make men miserable. But when mercy, in this probationary state, gives way to justice in the retributive age, the bad deed will pour out its full vial of wrath upon the head of the perpetrator. So of the good deed, it does not always yield the full blessedness with which it is fraught, simply because there are so many trials, disappointments, and sufferings in

this life; but when all the trials of earth are over they will yield the fulness of their blessedness. Secondly : Righteous tendency as to *destiny*. The legitimate tendency of every deed is to contribute to the force of impulse. A bad deed contributes a new impetus to impel the soul towards deeper regions of sorrow; and a good deed new force to urge the soul upwards into scenes of more perfect bliss. But this tendency has in neither case its legitimate influence here, but will when in retribution we receive back all the "*things done in the body*." Those deeds will be drastic, they will become forces against which, perhaps, all resistance will be futile, it may be for ever.

CONCLUSION.—What a sublimely awful thing is human life! In its deeds it carries with it the germs of its retributive

condition. Its every act has an imperishable life in it, it is a seed that must grow and produce its fruit. Not one terminates with its performance, each originates an unending series, touches chords that will vibrate along the arches of the interminable future. No officer of justice is

required to mark our conduct, detect our offences, and administer to us our deserts. Sin is its own punishment, virtue is its own reward. The wicked in his every act is treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, whilst the good in every act is laying up treasures in heaven.

## Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

No. X.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S EXEMPTION FROM BONDAGE TO OUTWARDNESS.

"WHEREFORE IF YE BE DEAD WITH CHRIST FROM THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, WHY, AS THOUGH LIVING IN THE WORLD, ARE YE SUBJECT TO ORDINANCES, (TOUCH NOT; TASTE NOT; HANDLE NOT; WHICH ALL ARE TO PERISH WITH THE USING;) AFTER THE COM-

MANDMENTS AND DOCTRINES OF MEN, WHICH THINGS HAVE INDEED A SHOW OF WISDOM IN WILL WORSHIP, AND HUMILITY, AND NEGLECTING OF THE BODY; NOT IN ANY HONOUR TO THE SATISFYING OF THE FLESH."

*Colossians* ii. 20-23.

"THE rudiments of the

world," of which our text speaks, are, according to Bishop Lightfoot, "the rudimentary, elementary ordinances and discipline of the mundane sphere;" or, according to Conybeare, "the childish lessons of outward things." Taking the two renderings together, does it not seem that Paul is rather speaking of the spirit of outward things, and not of outward things, themselves: the spirit of outwardness as opposed to that of inwardness? And if so, is it not suggested here—

I. THAT THE CHRISTIAN IS EXEMPT FROM BONDAGE TO OUTWARDNESS. He is not ordinance-ridden. What ordinance does Paul primarily speak of? Mingled and interfused Judaic, Gnostic, Essene and Pharisaic. Paul quotes the words of some of their prescriptive limitations about wine, oil, meat, &c. And also he

shows what embargo that spirit of outwardness placed on intercourse with persons who were (a) ceremonially unclean, (β) religiously inferior, (γ) nationally alien. He adduces three reasons against being bound in the bondage of ordinances and regulations concerning such outward things. (1) *That such things themselves are transient and fleeting.* "The fashion of the world passeth away" he says in another place; and here "which all are to perish with the using." They who guide their course by such things are as mariners who would direct their voyage rather by the clouds than by the stars. (2) *That the virtues that are cultivated in care for such are sham virtues.* They engender (a) *vanity.* (β) *arbitrariness.* (γ) *false humility because voluntary and affected.* (3) *That such bondage fails in*

its object, "not in any honour."

II. THAT IN CHRIST'S DEATH IS THE POWER AND PATTERN OF EXEMPTION FROM SUCH OUTWARDNESS. Paul is accustomed to dwell on the Christian's complete identification with Christ; "crucified," "buried," "risen" with Him. Here it is identification with Jesus in His death. "Make Thou, O Christ a dying of my life." This, first and mainly, describes a dying to sin; here a dying to the dominion of outwardness. It is the paradox of Christian experience, "I am truly alive because I am dead." About this insensibility to the dominion of the external, this "death to outwardness," Paul here teaches (1) *Christ's death is the power by which man dies to merely outward rule and regulation.* Through meditation, sympathy, fellowship, faith in the

death of Christ, not only is the soul fired with hatred to sin which slew Him, and with the love of God who could love thus, but of the hollowness of all formality and coldness of all legality, in the presence of such motives. (2) *Christ's death is the pattern of such exemption from bondage, to the outward.* The unresponsiveness of His dead body on the Cross is an image of the soul that through faith in Him is dead to the world. That independence to the external is (a) *complete*: and (β) *gradually obtained*.

"Let no man think that sudden,  
in a minute,  
All is accomplished, and the  
work is done:  
Though with thine earliest  
dawn, thou shouldest  
begin it,  
Scarce were it ended with the  
setting sun."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. III.

### A HIGH TYPE OF PERSONAL CHRISTIANITY.

"BEING CONFIDENT OF THIS VERY THING, THAT HE WHICH HATH BEGUN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL PERFORM IT UNTO THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST: EVEN AS IT IS MEET FOR ME TO THINK THIS OF YOU ALL, BECAUSE I HAVE YOU IN MY HEART; INASMUCH AS BOTH IN MY BONDS, AND IN THE DEFENCE AND CONFIRMATION OF THE GOSPEL, YE ALL ARE PARTAKERS OF MY GRACE, FOR GOD IS MY RECORD, HOW GREATLY I LONG AFTER YOU ALL IN THE BOWELS OF JESUS CHRIST." *Phil.* i. 6-8.

These words bring under our notice a *high type of personal Christianity*. It was a type—

I. In which the greatest

Apostle HAD THE STRONGEST CONFIDENCE. "Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it." The apostle seems to have had confidence, First: In its *character*. It is "a good work." Genuine religion is in every sense, a good thing (1) Good in its *essence*—supreme love to the supremely good. (2) Good in its *influence*. In its influence on *self*, elevating the soul to the image, and the friendship of God. Good in its influence on *society*, ameliorating the woes of the race by enlightening the ignorant, healing the afflicted, enfranchising the enthralled. Whatever of goodness is found in Christen-



dom unknown in heathen lands to-day, must be ascribed to this "good work." The apostle seems to have had confidence Secondly: In its *internality*. "In you." Some would read amongst you, supposing the reference to be to the influence of Christianity on Philippi and its neighbourhood, but there is no authority for this. It is "*in you*." Christianity is a good thing outside of us, yet unless it enters into our natures, permeates, inspires, dominates, &c., it is of no service. No more service than the noontide sun is to the man whose eyes are sealed in darkness. The apostle seems to have confidence Thirdly: In its *divinity*. "He which hath begun a good work." He, undoubtedly, the all-loving Father. Every good in the universe, begins with the Good One. The first good thoughts, sympathy, volitions, aims, principles of action in the human soul, originate with Him, from whence comes every "good and perfect gift." Personal Christianity in a man is a Divine thing, it is the eternal Logos made flesh. The apostle seems to have had confidence Fourthly: In its *perpetuity*. "Will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "The day of Jesus Christ."

"So also in chapters i. 10, ii. 16, and in 1 Cor. i. 18, "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," in all other epistles, "the day of our Lord" (as in 1 Cor. v. 5, 2 Cor. i. 14, 1 Thess. v. 2, 2 Thess. ii. 2) or still more commonly both in gospel and epistles "that day." As is usual in the epistles the day of the Lord is spoken of as if it were near at hand. St. Paul in 2 Thess. ii. 2, declines to pronounce that it is near, yet does not say that it is far away, and only teaches that there is much to be done even in the development of anti-Christian power before it does come. It is, of course, clear that in respect of the confidence here expressed, it makes no difference whether it be near or far away. The reality of the judgment as final and complete is the one point important, the times and seasons matter not to us."—*Dr. Barry*.

Whatever period is here pointed to, it must not be supposed as conveying the idea that this "good work" *terminates* at that period "until the day." It does not say that then it will become extinct. The idea it suggests rather, to me is that having existed up to that period under most inauspicious circumstances, struggling with awful difficul-

ties, after that, when all that is unfavourable is removed, it will go on for ever. The doctrine of final perseverance, as it has been called, has engaged immense discussion, often foolish, sometimes acrimonious, seldom useful. It should not be looked upon as a doctrine, but rather regarded as a *duty*, and as a law of spiritual life.\* It was a type of personal Christianity—

II. With which the greatest apostle FELT THE INTENSEST SYMPATHY. “Even as it is meet [right] for me to think this of you all because I have you in my heart: inasmuch as both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel ye all are partakers of my grace.” Or rather as in the margin, “Partakers with me of grace.” His sympathy with them is shown by the fact that, First: They *occupied his thoughts*. “Even as it is meet,” *diakion*, that is just, or right, to have this prayerful confidence. According to a law of mind we must always think of those with whom we have the deepest sympathy. The chief object of love is ever the chief subject of thought. His sympathy is shown by the fact that, Secondly: They *filled his*

*heart*. “I have you in my heart.” And the reason he assigns is because of their hearty identification with him in his ministry. “Inasmuch as both in my bonds and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel ye all are partakers of grace.” What a blessed thing it is for a man to have himself in the heart of a true-hearted, truly generous one. His sympathy is shown by the fact that, Thirdly: They *inspired his Christliness*. “For God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.” The word “bowels” should be translated “heart.” —“I long after you all in the heart of Christ Jesus.”—*Dr. Samuel Davidson*. In another place the apostle says: “I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Perhaps what the Apostle means here is, all that I have in me of the ideas, spirit, and aim of Christ are excited to a yearning for your good when I think of you. It is a characteristic of a genuine disciple that he is under the inspiration and control of the same great moral passion as his Master: viz., disinterested, self-sacrificing, all-conquering love. “All real spiritual love is but a portion of Christ’s love which yearns for all to be united to Him.”—*Dean Alford*.

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\* See “Philosophy of Happiness,”

# Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCXXIX.

## The Redeemed in Heaven.

“THEREFORE ARE THEY BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD, AND SERVE HIM DAY AND NIGHT IN HIS TEMPLE, AND HE THAT SITTETH ON THE THRONE SHALL DWELL AMONGST THEM.”—*Rev. vii. 15.*

THESE words are only part of a glorious description of the condition of the redeemed contained in the context, and they teach that I. The redeemed in heaven occupy THE MOST ELEVATED POSITION. They are “before the throne.” A throne is the emblem of regal authority, and before this throne we are always appearing in this life, but we are not *conscious* of it. In heaven there is the consciousness of it. All these have First: A *permanent* consciousness of the supreme rule. Secondly: An *exalted* consciousness of the supreme rule. II. The redeemed in heaven ARE ENGAGED IN THE GRANDEST SERVICE. “And serve HIM day and night.” They serve Him in every department of action. And serve Him without pause, “day and night.” Serve Him *lovingly, wholly, and constantly*. III. The redeemed in heaven are BLESSED WITH THE LOFTIEST COMPANIONSHIP. “He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell amongst them.” What will it be to have God—the source of all wisdom, purity, and blessedness—as our constant Companion?

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No. CCCXXX.

## The Key which Sets the World to Music.

“LET ALL YOUR THINGS BE DONE WITH CHARITY.”—1 *Cor. xvi. 14.*

DR. SAMUEL DAVIDSON’S translation of these words is, “Let all your acts be done in love.” Man’s life consists of many acts, many “*things done*.” Activity is at once the law and the necessity of his nature. He only really lives as he acts, inactivity is death. But whilst the acts of men are numerous and varied, the animating and controlling spirit should be *one*, and that spirit is *love*. It is thus in heaven, through all hierarchies. It should be thus on earth, and must be if earth is to have a millennium. I. This one spirit will make us HAPPY in all our activities. The labour of love is the music of life. All labour, however menial, if wrought under

the inspiration of love, must yield happiness. II. This one spirit will make us **USEFUL** in all our activities. Every work performed by love is beneficent, it has a brightness in it to enlighten, a balm in it to soothe, a music in it to charm, an aroma in it to please. III. This one spirit will **GIVE UNITY** to all our activities. As the circulating sap binds the root, the trunk, and the branches, the leafage, blossoms, and fruit, into one organic unity, so love will give a harmony and completeness to all the numerous and varied acts of life. Why are men everywhere so unhappy in their labours, and their labours so socially pernicious, so disharmonious and divided? Because they are not animated and governed by this *one* spirit—*love*. The human labours of the world that spring from greed, ambition, vanity, blind impulse, envy, and resentment, keep individuals, communities, and nations in constant conflict and confusion.

No. CCCXXXI.

### Redemption to the Right and the Secure.

“**BUT GOD COMMENDETH HIS LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US. MUCH MORE, THEN, BEING NOW JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, WE SHALL BE SAVED FROM WRATH THROUGH HIM.**”—*Rom. v. 8, 9.*

HERE are two subjects for useful thought. I. The **moral WRONGNESS AND DANGER** of mankind. The text contains the word, “*sinner*,” representing men that are in the wrong, transgressors of the divine law. It contains also the word, “*wrath*,” implying danger, and danger in consequence of the wrong. Wrath in God is not an angry passion, but a benevolent antagonism against wrong. It is a benevolent principle, not a malign passion. The opposition of love is for many reasons a more terrible thing than the opposition of anger. Men as sinners oppose God, and God as the all-loving One, opposes them, and His opposition is called “*wrath*,” and wrath because it is a terrible thing. The other subject for thought in the text is: II. The **moral DELIVERANCE AND RECTIFICATION** of mankind. There are two words in the text that express these two things, “*justified*” and “*saved*.” I take the word “*justified*” not in a forensic but in a *moral* sense, the sense of being made right. The word “*saved*” I take in a spiritual and not in a legal or material sense. It means the restoration of the soul to lost intelligence, lost purity, lost liberty, lost love, lost friendship, with God. Now, mark how moral rectification and spiritual salvation come. First: They *flow from God’s love*. “God

commendeth His love (or as some read, His own love) toward us." His love is the ultimate cause, the primal font. Secondly: They come from God's love *through the love of Christ*. Christ is at once the Demonstration, the Emblem, and the Medium of God's love. Christ demonstrates the reality and strength of this divine love by His death. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." His death, therefore, becomes that mighty, moral force to make the wrong right, the lost safe.

No. CCCXXXII.

### Genuine Philanthropy.

"FOR I LONG TO SEE YOU, THAT I MAY IMPART UNTO YOU SOME SPIRITUAL GIFT, TO THE END YE MAY BE ESTABLISHED."—*Rom. i. 11.*

IN these words we have a sketch of *genuine philanthropy*. I. Its distinguishing power. It is a power to impart "*some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established,*" or confirmed. There is a philanthropy that has power to impart certain *material* and *mental* gifts, but is unable to impart the *spiritual*. (1) All men require "*spiritual gifts.*" (2) Most men have them not. (3) None but those who have them can impart them. Notice: II. Its distinguishing INSPIRATION. "*I long.*" It is my deep craving, my burning desire. To enrich men spiritually is to enrich them completely, and for ever. And this is evermore the supreme desire of genuine philanthropy. "*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.*"

No. CCCXXXIII.

### Soul Redemption.

"FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YE WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS," &c.—*1 Peter i. 18, 19.*

THESE words lead us to look at soul redemption in three aspects: I. AS AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT. "*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,*" &c. This implies the fact that they were redeemed, redeemed from the bondage of moral ignorance and corruption. What is a redeemed soul? Let us look at redemption: II. AS UNATTAINABLE BY WORLDLY WEALTH. "*Not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold.*" No material resources can enfranchise a soul. Let us look at redemption: III. AS EFFECTED ONLY BY CHRIST. "*But with the precious blood of Christ.*" (For remarks on this expression see "*Homilist,*" vol. xlviii., p. 81.) His "*precious blood,*" means His precious life.



# *Ministers Whom I Have Known.*

(Continued from page 137.)

THE late *Rev. J. G. Stamper*, of Uxbridge, I well knew ; in truth, we were intimate friends for many years. He was a man about the average height, somewhat thin, of pleasant countenance, refined deportment, and stately gait. He was a gentleman in spirit, bearing, and manners. He was by no means a strong man, but often valetudinary ; nor was his mind of any great vigour or grasp. Notwithstanding, and perhaps because of this, he was a popular preacher. For many years he laboured in Uxbridge, built, what was considered at that time, a fine chapel, gathered a good congregation, which he kept until the last. Having been there for many years, one of his deacons, a small tradesman in the town, became so offensive to his sensitive nature, that he determined to resign. I was the means of introducing him to the Tabernacle, at Haverfordwest, in Pembrokeshire, which for many years had been supplied by some of the most distinguished ministers of the denomination, from London and elsewhere. This chapel was rebuilt a few years ago, and I preached at the re-opening services. Here Mr. Stamper laboured with great acceptance for several years, and when he left on account of his health, his departure was greatly lamented in the town and county. A little incident occurs to me at this moment of a somewhat ludicrous character. Some thirty-five years ago, or more, we took with a friend of his a tour into South Wales. We hired carriages and drove from one interesting spot to another. One of the scenes we visited was Aberystwith, a small town, but which has now a magnificent building, called the University, an institution which I had the honour of originating, obtaining the first £1,000, and worked at until it was opened, and at whose opening ceremonies I officiated, and the Lord Lieutenant of the county was in the chair. I state this incidentally, because now that it is accomplished, others have arisen who claim the honour of its origination.\* At the time when we were making this little tour, there was a movement in Wales, which I see by the papers is revived at Rhayadar, called the " Rebecca " movement. It was a secret organisation, formed for the purpose of destroying the turnpike gates, which were most numerous at that time in Wales, and

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\* See " Homilist," Vol. xl. p 456.

which inflicted a very heavy tax on farmers who had to convey in their carts lime from a distance to their farms. The agents who worked this destruction were a body of agriculturists from the various neighbourhoods where the gates abounded. They disguised themselves and stealthily went forth at midnight to perpetrate the devastation. They made clean work of it; the gates were taken up, destroyed, thrown over the hedge, and generally the posts also. Rebecca's achievements were the subjects of general thought, and the topic of general converse. It so happened that on our approaching Aberystwith there was a turnpike gate, kept by a burly Welshman. While I was searching in my purse for the sixpence, I said to the man in a jocular way, "I am sorry Rebecca has not been here yet." "Rebecca," he exclaimed, "she dare not come here, we would do for her." It so happened that on the next morning, when we returned that way, the gate was gone, but there stood the burly keeper. He was rather an old man, and could not run fast: he recognised the carriage, and began to run after us, but we quickened the speed of the horse, so that we were soon out of his reach and sight. Another little incident in connection with this dear old friend (by this reference) comes flashing back to memory. Although it was a very grave thing at the time, I have often laughed at it since. Mr. Stamper, Rev. Mr. Milne, M.A., late missionary to China, and myself, went down to Hemel Hempstead, in Berkshire, to attend a London Missionary meeting. We all dined together at the house of Mr. Price, the minister of the Chapel. After dinner, the subject of mesmerism came up, for our kind host not only believed in its power, but had produced some extraordinary phenomena in connection with it. We were all disbelievers, and I challenged our host to bring any one into the room and allow one of us three to try whether we could produce any of the mesmeric results. Whereupon he said, "I will see if I can persuade one of my servants to come." He went to the kitchen, and after talking to one of the maids, she reluctantly consented, and said she knew something of me, and had heard me preach, and she would not object to me trying. Whereupon, Mr. Price brought her into the room—a strong country girl of about twenty-five, who would impress you at first sight as being too shrewd to be deceived, and too honest to deceive, an intelligent, frank, girl. On Mr. Price placing her in the proper position, I asked him how to proceed. He put me about a yard

distant from her, and told us to look at each other. We did so for about five minutes, and then she fell back in her chair and commenced to snore. I was positively frightened, and shook all over. After allowing her to sleep some five or ten minutes, I asked him to rouse her. He said no one could do it but the person who mesmerised her. Therefore I tried, first by shouting in her ear, which had no effect; shaking her, no effect; then pinching her, no effect; then putting pins in her, no effect. She continued to snore on. We—the deputation—began to feel it a serious matter. Mr. Milne, the missionary, said we should all be had up before the magistrates, and that he would start for London by the next train. Mr. Stamper became white as a sheet. I was scarcely less terrified. Then our host went to his library for a book on mesmerism, to see how she was to be restored. He said some passes were to be made. Under his direction I tried this. It was a very hot day, I took off my coat, I flung my arms in every direction, I blew on her, I bellowed in her ear, but still she snored. After a considerable time, however, she opened her eyes, stood up, and was restored. So deeply impressed was I with this tremendous power that one person may have over another, that I have never attempted it since.\* I will narrate another little incident in connection with Mr. Stamper, which is perhaps worth relating. A little before he left Uxbridge, I was one Monday morning in his library, when a poor farm labourer knocked at his door, and on its being opened, he said to the servant, “Is Measter Stamper at home?” On an affirmative reply, he said, “I wants to see un.” The message was delivered, and Mr. Stamper went to speak to him. He said to the visitor, “Do you want to see me, my good man?” “Yes, sur, I wants to say a word to yer.” “Come in, then.” “No, sur, I shall dirty your nice place with my clogs.” “Wipe them, then.” The labourer did so, and followed Mr. Stamper into the library. Sitting down, and holding his old hat between his legs, he said, “I’ve been to your chapel, sur, several Sunday nights. My ole woman, who belongs to yer, persuaded me to go. I likes to hear yer, and yet I doesn’t. Yer does stick it into me so. I can’t sleep arter it, I couldn’t sleep last night; and I thinks to myself, I’ll call on Measter Stamper this morning, and tell him I can’t go any more if he sticks

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\* I have an indistinct memory that I have referred to this incident in some previous sketch in the “Homilist.”

it in so. Now, sur, I'll go every Sunday evening with my ole woman if you promise not to stick it in so." This, perhaps, expresses the feelings of hundreds who attend a faithful ministry. They like it, and do not like it. Strange to say, that through absorbing engagements, I almost lost sight of this dear friend during the last years of his life, knew not of his illness, and did not hear of his death until he was buried.

(To be continued.)

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## *The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.*

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### SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

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#### The Sensitive Plant—The Law of Sympathy.

SYMPATHY, as Edmund Burke has well said, may be considered as a sort of substitution by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected. And Coleridge declares that by sympathy all powerful souls have kindred with each other. But no words of either orators or philosophers can convey a better idea of this mystic power, and of its workings, than we may obtain by looking at its emblem, the *mimosa sensitiva*—the sensitive plant. As a friend feels for a friend, so each of its leaves seems to feel for each other. Who that

knows, who that has seen it, has not remarked the strange sensibility of its leaves? The slightest touch suffices to make its folioles close upon their supports, the petiolar twigs upon the common petiole, and the common petiole upon the stem. If we wound the extreme end of one foliole, the others immediately approach in succession—like friends who come to share in suffering or danger. The movement is not mere local irritability, but communicates from circle to circle in the various elements of the leaf, and propagates itself from one leaf to another. This is like

sympathy in an association of loving friends. It is worthy of notice, that the more vigorous the sensitive plant is in its habit, the more susceptible is it. The healthiest plants of this family are always the most

sensitive. So, also, is it with human sympathy—the best natures always have the most of it. Sentimentality may be found in any low type of mankind, but pure sympathy resides only in the noble soul.

### The Bird Robbed of her Nest—The Influence of Disappointment.

THE bird whose nest has been robbed several times, builds up her last one in a very slovenly manner, apparently conscious that the approaching decline of summer renders it inexpedient that she should attempt to give the structure the perfect finish and completeness which, if time permitted, she had intended to bestow. After many disappointments in life we, too, like the bird, curtail, in disappointment, the accomplishment of our elaborate plans. If, after rude and sacrilegious hands have frequently destroyed them, we yet make one final attempt to carry them into execution, we often do so under

a sense of disappointment and pressure. We feel disheartened. The zest and poetry of our task have gone. If eventually we accomplish the delayed task at all, still we have no spring-tide joyousness in our spirit, as when we began. We review all the defects, and all the want of elaboration which our work reveals, and mournfully feel how different all would have been if only opportunity had been more propitious. We worked under a sense of the coming night, for disappointment deprived us of our spring. But it were better, like the bird, to work even so than not at all.

### Tree Life—Action and Repose—a Law of Life.

THERE is action and repose even in the life of the tree. The circulation of the sap in the tree is in its most active state in the spring time. The plant

is then full of liquid, and in some plants the juices flow at the slightest incision. In spring—according to the poetical expression consecrated by



use—the vine, and some other plants “bleed ;” but when the leaves are fully developed, they will no longer bleed when wounded. When the branches develope themselves and consolidate, then the movement of the sap becomes slower. It is sometimes roused towards the end of summer, when, the spring having been premature, the materials which the plant has elaborated for the vegetation of the following year have been set to work before their time. After the fall of the leaf, and when the approach of winter lowers the temperature, the movement of sap is stopped entirely. The tree arrives, by little and little, at a state of

almost absolute repose ; this is not death, but life which awaits its re-awakening. In human life we have, even still more plainly written, this same law of action and repose, ever in alternation. From youth to manhood, and from manhood to old age, how incessant is the activity. As Ovid says of life, “Alternate rest and labour long endure.” And, at the end of all this alternation of activity and repose ; and, at the conclusion of the last long act of repose itself, are we not like the tree to have our re-awakening in a day to dawn as surely and as brightly as the spring ?

D. M. T.

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## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books ; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., D.C.L. By EWING RITCHIE. THE PICTORIAL TREASURY OF FAMOUS MEN AND FAMOUS DEEDS. London : Sangster & Co., Paternoster Row.

Here are two volumes from the same publishing firm. The first, viz., THE LIFE AND TIMES OF RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, has many attractions. It has several large and capital portraits of our most prominent public men, viz., of Gladstone, Hartington,

Argyle, and John Bright. We have never seen portraits more life-like. It has also many pictorial illustrations of notable places. Above all, its pages are written with the fertile, graphic, and well-practised pen of Ewing Ritchie. Gladstone himself is a grand subject for a volume, and Gladstone's times are amongst the most eventful in the history of England. We forgot to say in connection with the illustrations that there are also here pictures—less elaborate—of the late Earl Derby, Buxton, Lord Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, the late Duke of Kent—whose countenance is amongst the most carnal we have ever seen, low brow, luscious eyes, and thick lips. This is one of the books which should be purchased, and if purchased, it is sure to be read.—THE PICTORIAL TREASURY OF FAMOUS MEN AND FAMOUS DEEDS is a volume which seems to have more attractions even than the former. It has sketches of naval and military heroes, discoverers, statesmen, philanthropists, artists, authors, and others. It is embellished with 100 first class wood engravings, and a series of full paged portraits of celebrities. Among them we have the Prince of Wales—who is not unlike his grandfather—Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Nelson, Christopher Columbus—a magnificent face—Sir Walter Scott, Sir Christopher Wren, Duke of Wellington, General Garibaldi, General Washington. These are all large and coloured. One of the portraits—that of Garibaldi—is worth the price of the whole volume. Then there are a good many smaller and uncoloured portraits, among which we find Shakspeare, Edison, Milton and his daughter, Sir Rowland Hill, Lesseps, Sir Robert Peel, Cromwell, Dickens, Michael Angelo, Napoleon the Third, Empress Eugenie, Charles the First of England, Lord John Russell, Gambetta, Giotto, and Mrs. Somerville. A most beautiful book this for a present.

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DUTY; WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF COURAGE, PATIENCE, AND ENDURANCE.

By SAMUEL SMILES, LL.D. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.

The work of Dr. Smiles on such a subject is sure to command an extensive circulation. We submit the following short extracts from the chapter on "Sympathy," as specimens which will be sure to prompt the reader to procure this work:—"The power of money is over estimated. Paul and his disciples spread Christianity half over the world with little more money than is gained from a

fashionable bazaar . . . The great social doctrines of Christianity are based on the idea of brotherhood, each to assist the other, the strong the weak, the rich the poor, the learned the ignorant . . . Though we look to our understanding for amusement, it is to the affections only that we can trust for happiness. . . . There is no real social attachment without sympathy. Very sad is the story told by the late Dean Ramsay, of a boy who was told of heaven and of the meeting of the departed there, and said, 'Will father be there?' On being told 'Of course he will be there,' he answered, 'Then I'll no gang.' . . . Men are regenerated not so much by truth in the abstract, as by the divine inspiration that comes by human sympathy. A blacksmith said of Dr. Norman MacLeod, 'When he came to see me he spoke as if he had been a smith himself.' . . . The last words which Judge Talford spoke—and they were spoken from the bench of Justice in Oswestry—were these, 'If I were to be asked what is the great want of English society, so as to link class with class, I would say it is the want of sympathy.' As these words fell from his lips he breathed his last. . . . Sydney Smith, speaking of an unsympathetic man, says, 'He is of the utilitarian school, is so hard that you may draw a broad wheeled waggon over him, and it would produce no impression. If you were to bore holes in him with a gimlet, I am convinced that sawdust would come out of him.'" Let our readers try to get this book into the hands of young men especially.

THE FUTURE OF PALESTINE. By B. WALKER. London: James Nisbet & Co.

Last month we called the attention of our readers to the last edition of the magnificent work, entitled, "Dr. Thomson's Land and the Book." This volume relates to the same subject, within narrower limits, and dealing mainly with the future history of that goodly land. It consists of fourteen chapters, the subjects of which are:—The Ground of Inquiry—Secular History from the Earliest Times to the Establishment of the Jewish Monarchy—From the Establishment of the Monarchy to the Return of the Jews from Captivity—From the Return from Captivity to the Destruction of Jerusalem, and the Dispersion of the Jewish Nation—From the Dispersion of the Jews to the Present Time—Its Tenta-

tive Solution ; showing the necessity of taking into account the Miraculous Portion of the Bible Narrative—The Preservation of the Jews as a nation, and the Conversion of a Great Part of the Gentile World to a Modified Form of their Religious Belief—The Founder of Christianity—Prophecies concerning the Messiah—The Types and Symbols—Supernatural Occurrences forming part of the Series of Events which was to culminate in the Manifestation of the Son of God—The Spiritual Rule of Christ under the New Dispensation—The Kingdom of God—Elijah. Each chapter is full of information and elevated thought, and written in a clear and vigorous style.

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SAVONAROLA. By ELIZABETH WARREN. London : S. W. Partridge & Co.

This book is a vivid and vigorous sketch of one of the most extraordinary and noble-souled men that have lived since the days of Christ. The contents are, Childhood and Youth—Disappointed Hopes—Convent of San Marco—Unexpected Popularity—The Magnificent and the Prior—Extracts from Sermons—The Bible Student—Reformation in Literature and Art—Charles VIII. invades Italy—An Unwelcome Guest—The Popular Preacher and Political Adviser—Preaching, Praying and Working—Papal Hostility—Carnival of 1496—Prince Pico della Mirandola—Sermon on Amos and Zechariah—Sincerity of purpose : Weakness of Judgment—Popularity increases and Trouble likewise—Humiliating Disclosures—Carnival of 1497—Tumult on Ascension Day—Wrath of the Pope—Trial of Bernardo del Nero—The Triumph of the Cross—Trouble upon Trouble—Carnival of 1498—The Ordeal by Fire—Convent of San Marco Attacked—Imprisonment and Trial of Savonarola—Fra Domenico—Patient in Tribulation. Dr. Smiles in his last work, under the title of “Duty,” describes the hero of this volume, as “One who Ranks among the Jewels of History.” This work has the charm of romance, and the magical force which works out the *grandest reformations*.

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#### THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST PUBLICATIONS.

THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW. This QUARTERLY contains several good articles, and as a whole will certainly not suffer in comparison with the British Quarterly. It reflects great

credit upon the denomination of which it is the organ. It has several homiletical sketches.—*THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST MAGAZINE*. From April to November. These contain several good articles, with some fine illustrations.—*THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER*. From April to November. This is another monthly, and each number is brim full of interesting information.—*THE TEACHER'S MAGAZINE*. July to November. A capital little serial for Sunday School Teachers.—*THE JUVENILE MAGAZINE*.—*THE CHILD'S FRIEND*. June to November. These are for children, are beautifully illustrated, and in every way adapted to charm the child's heart.

*THE GARDEN*. Editor, Southampton Street, Strand.

The best weekly serial for those who wish to seek to bring as much of the useful and beautiful out of their garden as possible.

*THE DRAFT FREE CHURCH HYMN BOOK*. This has just come into our hands, and we have only time to write a word expressing our gratification to find that there are some members of congregations shocked with the absurdities, impieties, and the blasphemies of many of the hymns that are sung in churches and chapels every Sunday. Of the *Congregational Hymn Book*, which is not perhaps the worst, was said to me by an eminent Greek scholar, and one of the editors of the *Greek Testament*, and who also was a hymnist, that there are not a hundred hymns in that book which a man of reflection and conscience would think of singing. With what earnestness did Charles Kingsley denounce some of its most popular hymns. The time has come for all intelligent men to speak out on this question.

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#### BOOKS ON OUR TABLE FOR NOTICE.

"Heroes of the Cross," by Davenport Adams. "Appendix to Dr. Young's Concordance." "Gems of Great Authors." "Men of Light and Leading." "Select Thoughts on Religious Subjects." "Far Out." "System of Christian Doctrine." "Memorials of Dr. Candlish." "Golden Childhood." "The Prophet Jonah." "The Incarnation of God." "Chart and Compass—the Sailor's Magazine," Vol. II. "Ward's Universal Instructor," part III., &c., &c.





## *Leading Homily.*

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### MAN'S RIGHTS AND WRONGS.

“TO TURN ASIDE THE RIGHT OF A MAN.” *Lamentations*  
iii. 35.



HE text teaches that there are things to which man has a right, and that there are those who would wrong him by turning him away from his right.

I. MAN HAS RIGHTS. I shall devote this homily to an inquiry into his rights. That he has certain rights or prerogatives is too universally admitted to require either proof or illustration. The sentiment in man that he has rights is instinctive, and is seen working everywhere, in every part of the globe, and in every stage of civilisation. What are his rights? Though I have scarcely read Paley's "Moral and Political Philosophy" since my college days, and cannot put my hand on a copy for consultation while I am now writing, I have a distinct impression that he divides the rights of man into three classes—the natural and the adventitious, the alienable and the inalienable, the perfect and imperfect. In the natural he includes man's rights to his life, limbs, liberty, and the produce of his personal

labour, and by the adventitious he means the rights of a king over his subjects, a general over his soldiers, a judge over prisoners. And these I remember he maintains are not less sacred than the natural ones, and that the obligation to respect them is not less binding. Against this, in passing, I utter my protest. That the rights of a king, or of a general, for example, over their subjects or their soldiers, should be as sacred as the natural rights of man to his life, limbs and liberty, I pronounce not only irrational but blasphemous. It is a doctrine that strikes at the very root of liberty and manly independence. It lays at the foundation of all despotisms. In order to indicate some of the rights of man as man, I make two observations.

First: That man has an inalienable right to the *enjoyment of that happiness for which he was created*. That happiness is the ultimate design of the Infinite in creating the universe is all but universally admitted, not only by the religious, but by the scientific mind. God is love. The eternal law of love is to diffuse happiness, the immeasurable universe is the effect, the emblem and the medium of this love. All creatures that act in conformity with the laws of their nature, have as much happiness as will satisfy their cravings, and fill their capacities. If the grand end of our Creator in our creation was that we should be happy, then I maintain that whatever is *indispensable* for reaching this high condition of being, I have a right to: What is necessary to this?

First: *Physical health* is necessary to happiness. Where there is a diseased, enfeebled, emaciated body there cannot be happiness. Every man is anxious for physical health, and struggles for it. But to get it he

must have *physical liberty*. Man can no more get health without exercise than the flower can get beauty without the sun, or the trees of the forest get depth and strength of root without the rocking winds. Unless he has violated the rights of others, every man has a right to the fullest physical freedom, a right to walk the green fields, strengthen his muscles, and oxygenise his blood in the open air. But what millions in this free country of ours, who have committed no crime, are doomed by the tyrannic force of commercial cupidity, and by the heartlessness and injustice of legislation, to spend their time in filthy garrets and in foetid alleys. There is a slavery in the labourer's hut, the needle-woman's garret, and the servant's kitchen, as heartless and as grinding as any slavery under heaven. Of what service is any government to a people that does not secure for all untainted by crime full physical liberty? And, to get this health, he must be allowed the *right to the produce of his own labour*. There can be no health without physical food, and it is heaven's law that wholesome food shall be obtained by labour. "He that does not work shall not eat"—a most wise and beneficent law this. Labour is not a personal infliction, it is a natural institution, it was enjoined upon man in Paradisaic innocence in the dawn of his being. Perhaps the greater portion of the physical misery of mankind arises from the violation of this law. There are thousands eating that labour not, they consume all and produce nothing. They are drag-chains on the wheels of human progress, they are moral felons, living on the produce of other men's labours. It is because thousands eat and do not labour, and millions labour and are not allowed the full use of the produce of

their industry, that there is so much poverty in our midst. What a man has produced is his, and no other's, there is no other absolute property. If, then, it is God's will that we should be happy, and physical health is essential to happiness, to enjoy physical health we must have physical freedom, and the full use of the produce of our labour, then these things are our inalienable physical rights.

Secondly: *Intellectual culture* is essential to happiness. We have a mind as well as a body; nay, we are mind. Physical health would complete the happiness of a brute, but is only an inferior element in the happiness of a man. Man has a craving and a capacity for knowledge. One of the profoundest cries of his nature is, "Where shall wisdom be found?" Ignorance is not bliss, but the font of innumerable ills. The soul without knowledge is not good, it is a world without a sun—dark, cold, chaotic, dead. There is no Paradise for man where the tree of knowledge does not bloom, knowledge gives a new interest to life, a new meaning to the universe, a new sphere for the full play of our faculties. If, then, knowledge is essential to happiness, what is necessary to knowledge is a right.

*Intellectual liberty is necessary*, therefore a right. There must be the free use of our faculties, and to all the means of knowledge within our reach. True in this country there is no direct interference with this right, no legal proscription for the free use of our faculties. We have a free press, public libraries, and schools all but free. Albeit freedom of intellect is terribly restricted by the pressing demands of physical toil. The masses from morning till evening are so long and tightly chained to the car of hard labour, in order to

gain the means of subsistence, that they have neither the energy or the opportunity for mental occupation.

Thirdly: *A good conscience* is a necessary element of happiness. There is something within every man that concerns itself not with the truth or falsehood of propositions, nor with the expediency or in expediency of conduct, but with the right and wrong of actions. This we call conscience. Whether it has come by tradition or education, or is an inbred element in our nature, we need not inquire—it is there. Nothing gives us greater pain than when it reproves us, nothing greater pleasure than when it speaks in commendation. Now whatever is essential to a good conscience man has a *right* to; and is not *independence* necessary? The man who is not allowed to form his own convictions of duty, and to carry them out, can scarcely have a good conscience. He who surrenders his conscience to the dictates of others, degrades his nature; and he who is forced to lend his support to principles contrary to his own convictions is an insulted and an injured man.

Fourthly: *Social respect* is another element in happiness. Dr. Thomas Browne in one of his elegant philosophical lectures, has said that the respect of others is an important element in human happiness. Man must not only love, but be loved, in order to be happy. We are social beings, and to be assured of the sympathy and goodwill of those amongst whom we live and labour is essential to our social enjoyment. Whatever tends to degrade a man in the estimation of his contemporaries is an infringement of this right. The man as a citizen is degraded when he is denied what others enjoy, a right to contribute his part in the making of the laws that are to govern him. For a man



to be bound to obey human laws, and to be taxed by human laws, in whose production he has not had the whisper of a voice, is an outrage on his nature, and a social degradation.

From what has been advanced some of the inalienable rights of man have been made manifest, and manifest also is the absurdity of the doctrine that man in civilised society, must give up a portion of his rights for the common good. What is the common good but the good of each? And the good of each requires the full use of the right of each. The true function of civil society is not to override any of the personal rights of men, but to help their free development. No man in any country will ever be content or happy until the full possession of his rights is realised. The enjoyment of lost rights is the "great desire of nations," a desire whose mighty impulses have broken up many a government, produced many a revolution, and which is now upheaving many of the despotic states of Europe. A government founded upon the surrender of personal rights is like a stately mansion on a volcanic hill. The traveller as he passes may admire the symmetry of its architecture, and the beauty of its site, but underneath there are fiery, accumulating forces that will one day rive the mountain and engulf the building. The theory of Herbert Spencer goes to confirm all this. "It may be admitted that human happiness is the Divine will. We become conscious of happiness through the sensations. How do we receive sensations? Through what are called faculties. It is certain that a man cannot hear without ears; equally certain that he experiences no impression of any kind unless he is endowed with some power fitted to take in that impression, that is, a faculty. All the mental

states which he calls feelings and ideas, are affections of his consciousness received through his faculties. There next comes the question, Under what circumstances do the faculties yield those sensations of which happiness consists? There reply is, When they are exercised. It is from the activity of most of them that gratification arises. Every faculty in turn affords its special emotion, and the sum of these constitutes happiness: therefore happiness consists in the due exercise of all the faculties. Now if God wills man's happiness, and man's happiness can be obtained only by the exercise of his faculties, then God wills that man should exercise his faculties, for duty means the fulfilment of the divine will. As God wills man's happiness, that line of conduct which produces unhappiness, is contrary to His will. Either way, then, we find the exercise of the faculties to be God's will and man's duty. But the fulfilment of this duty, necessarily supposes freedom of action. Man cannot exercise his faculties without certain scope: He must have liberty to go and come, to see, to feel, to speak, to work, to get food, raiment, shelter, and to provide for all the needs of his nature. He must be free to do everything which is directly or indirectly requisite for the due satisfaction of every mental and bodily want. Without this, he cannot fulfil his duty or God's will. He has divine authority, therefore, for claiming this freedom of action. God intended him to have it; that is, he has a right to it. From this conclusion there seems no possibility of escape. Let us repeat the steps by which we arrive at it. God wills man's happiness. Man's happiness can only be produced by the exercise of his faculties. Then God wills that he should exercise his faculties. To exercise his

faculties he must have liberty to do all that his faculties naturally impel him to do. Then God wills that he should have that liberty. Therefore, he has a *right* to that liberty. Liberty is not the right of one, but of all. All are endowed with faculties. All are bound to fulfil the divine will by exercising them. All therefore, must be free to do those things in which the exercise of them consists, that is, all must have right to liberty of action. Wherefore we arrive at the general proposition that every one (man or woman) may claim the fullest liberty to exercise his faculties compatible with the possession of like liberty by every other person." Another observation I make here is :—

Secondly : That man has an inalienable right to those *conditions essential to the discharge of his obligations*. There are certain inviolable relations which all sustain to their fellow creatures and to their Creator. Out of these relations obligations arise which are ever binding, and the discharge of which is essential to each and to the general well-being. From the dawn of our responsibility the whole of our life, is a life of duty. Duty meets us everywhere, it is ubiquitous, it meets us at home and abroad, in solitude and society, in business and in pleasure. We can no more flee from it than we can from ourselves. Now duties and rights are co-relative. Where there is no duty there are no rights, where there are no rights there are no duties. The cardinal duties of our being may be put into three groups, *domestic*, *civil*, and *religious*. In order to discover a few of the leading rights that are involved in the claim that duty makes on us, let us give a hasty glance at each of these groups.

First: The *domestic* group. The duty of filial reverence

and love meets us at the beginning of our history, and is enjoined both by nature and the Bible. "Honour thy father and thy mother," is a mandate that not only rings in the Decalogue, but echoes ever more through natural reason, and conscience. But this very duty implies a right, a right to claim from the parent those moral attributes that shall command love, honour, and obedience. Parents must be honour-worthy before they can be honoured, love-worthy before they can be loved. It is not incumbent on any child to honour morally ignoble parents, or to love those whose characters are false, and mean, and corrupt. Nor could they do so. We are so formed that we cannot honour the morally dishonourable; nor love the morally hideous. Parental government, therefore, is based upon the right that children have to expect from parents the spiritually noble and pure. Let us glance at

Secondly: The *civil* group. Outside of the domestic sphere, but lying close to its door, there is the great world of our fellow creatures which we call society. This society has its institutions, its laws, and government. We live *in* this world, and we cannot live *without* it. Whoever is the chief administrator of the laws that govern society, whether placed in his supreme position by lineage, or suffrage, for his whole life or for a certain period, he is the king, and we are commanded to *honour* and *obey* him. But this duty implies that the king is honour-worthy, and that his laws are righteous. If he be corrupt in his personal character, governed by greed, ambition, and sensual enjoyment, and if in his public conduct he be ruthless and tyrannic, he cannot be either honoured or obeyed; nay, he ought not to be. On the contrary, he should be abhorred, denounced, de-

throned. Immorality in an individual in private life is to be shunned with loathing, and denounced with severity, but in official, and especially in royal life, it is a thousand times more abhorrent and vile. The King that the Bible calls upon us to honour is one who is morally royal in soul, an exemplar of the highest morality, whilst a "terror to evil doers" but a "*praise to them that do well.*" I have a right, each citizen has a right, to demand the highest virtue in the man who calls himself my king. It is the glory of our nature that we can only honour those who are morally honourable. I have a right to demand of my king that he should be kingly in all the virtues;—and of the laws that govern me, that they should be just. Let us glance at

Thirdly: The *religious* group. The great duty that grows out of our relation to our Maker is this, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might." But this supreme obligation of humanity implies rights on man's part. (1) A right to the means of knowing Him. To love a being of whom we know nothing is impossible. Our affections are dead to all objects outside our intelligence. If the Supreme Being requires me to love Him supremely He must furnish me with a revelation of Himself, and with capacities capable of understanding and appreciating that revelation. This obligation implies (2) A right to supreme goodness on His part. He must appear as the infinitely lovely One, the altogether beautiful, in order to kindle my highest affections. Now in relation to Him our rights are equal to our obligations. He has given us all that we require to fulfil the duties He demands. There is no excuse, therefore, for our not rendering to Him the entire homage of our being.



Alas ! I fear the pulpit has lost much of its power by not propounding and enforcing the rights of man. Everywhere, especially amongst the lower classes, people are lectured about their duties. The thoughtful artisans of England say, " We have had enough of this talk, parsons are everlastingly lecturing us about our duties to our parents, our king, and our God ; our rights are often outraged and ignored. We'll have no more of this, we'll have our halls of discussion, and independent political books and journals. We turn from the parsons to Tom Payne, Herbert Spencer, Stuart Mill." Why should this be ? Did not Christ preach the doctrine of human rights ? Everywhere He preached the rights of man, and thundered denunciation upon their violaters, whether civil or religious. Let preachers follow Him in this respect more than they have done, and the people who now shun the Churches will throng their aisles.

*(To be continued in our next.)*

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SCEPTICISM.—Scepticism is not intellectual only, it is moral also ; a chronic atrophy and disease of the whole soul. A man lives by believing something, not by debating and arguing about many things. A sad case for him when all he can manage to believe is something he can button in his pocket—something he can eat and digest ! Lower than that he will not get. We call those ages in which he gets so low, the mournfullest, sickliest, and meanest of all ages. The world's heart is palsied, sick ; how can any limb of it be whole ? Genuine acting ceases in all departments of the world's works ; dexterous similitude of acting begins. The world's wages are pocketed ; the world's work is not done. Heroes have gone out ; quacks have come in.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this **TEHELM**, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough **HOMILETIC** treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) **THE HISTORY** of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) **ANNOTATIONS** of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) **THE ARGUMENT** of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) **THE HOMILETICS** of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLV.

### A Picture of Christ as the Moral Conqueror of Mankind.

“THE LORD SAID UNTO MY LORD,” &c. Ps. cx. 1-7.

**HISTORY:**—This Psalm is ascribed to David; and the tone, language, spirit, and contents seem to authorise us to attribute the authorship to him.

**ANNOTATIONS:**—Ver. 1. “*The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*” “The oracle of Jahve unto my Lord.” Sit thou at my right hand, until

I make thine enemies the stool of thy feet.” *Delitsch*. Jehovah spake in vision to the Lord of the psalmist, and bade him sit on His right hand. “*Right hand*” is the seat of chief honour, and refers to the custom of a king placing his son on the throne with him (1 Kings i. 43-48). “*Thy footstool.*” An allusion to the custom of placing the foot on the necks of the vanquished.

Ver. 2.—“*The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.*” &c. “The Psalmist now turns to address the King Himself, who sits beside Jehovah’s throne, and declares how the victory over His enemies shall be achieved, viz., by the help of Jehovah. Jehovah Himself shall wield the rod of His dominion, and shall stretch ‘forth, far and wide, beginning from Zion.’”—*Prebendary Young.*

Ver. 3.—“*Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of thy youth.*” “A description of the preparation for the conflict. The meaning is, Thy people shall be willing (lit. willingnesses or free offerings, plural of excellence) in the day of Thy prowess: clad in robes of holiness (2 Chron. xx. 21) as befits the minister of a holy service (xxix. 2), as becomes the soldiers of a Priest-king. After the word “*holiness*” there should be a full stop. ‘From the womb of the morning (falls) to the dew of thy youth,’ i.e., as the dew of early morning, in multitude and sudden, unexpected, marvellous appear-

ance (comes) an unnumbered troop of thy youthful followers. Others interpret the words: as the dew of early morning, abundant, refreshing, spreading far and wide, miraculous is the might of thy perpetual youth.” — *Canon Cooke.*

Ver. 4.—“*The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*” “The union of priesthood and kingship in David, was more complete than in any other sovereign of Judah. At the election of Saul, the two offices were entirely distinct: and Saul’s attempted usurpation of the priestly functions was severely rebuked and punished (1 Sam. xiii. 9). The possibility was not without effect in causing the massacre of the priests at Nob. Certainly after the massacre the hopes of the priesthood were centred in David as their protector and future king. Compare 1 Sam. xxiii. 6, 9; 1 Chron. xii. 27. After this David was recognised as the head of the priesthood, offered sacrifices, 2 Sam. vi. 14-18, and delivered the priestly benediction. So also Solomon. 2 Chron. vi. 3. Though the

offices were never subsequently separated in the popular mind, there was occasionally strong antagonism between them, as in the case of Uzziah."—*Four Friends*.

Ver. 5.—"*The Lord at thy hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.*" Jehovah is here represented as helping David's Lord in the conflict.

Ver. 6. — "*He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.*" "Fill the places with dead bodies" means the battle field shall be covered with the bodies of the slain. As a conqueror, his victories shall be great. The heads of many countries, the leaders, chieftains, and rulers of nations.

Ver. 7.—"*He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.*" "In this verse the psalmist sees the conqueror in pursuit, pausing for a moment to refresh himself by the wayside mountain torrent, but not fainting like Samson (Judges xv. 18), nor giving himself time for repose, until he triumphs gloriously."

ARGUMENT:—(1) "The king is setting forth to war after prayer and sacrifice. The prophet promises the help of Jehovah, whom in a bold figure, he describes as driving to the battle in his chariot of war, with the king as his earthly vicegerent, seated at his side (Ver. 1). (2) Fired by this thought, the imagination of the poet pictures the fight and the victory. He sees the king grasping the sacred sceptre, and asserting his supremacy over his foes. (Ver. 2). (3) He sees the troops glittering their armour like victims decked for the sacrifice, ready to go in jeopardy of their lives, for their God and for their king, brilliant and countless as dew drops of the summer morn. (Ver. 3). (4) The psalmist pauses in his song of triumph, to begin a second strophe, as he had begun the first, with a fresh promise from Jehovah, that the golden age of the Patriarchs is to be realised once more, and David is to be the priest as well as the king of the nation. (Ver. 4). (5) Then he returns to the thought of the impending battle, and shows that the promise was not to be barren of result: that the king's inviolability would

be vindicated on the battle field, that the God whose priest he was, would fight beside him, and would assert His supremacy over the

kings of the heathen by a judgment which would cover the field with the slain." (Ver. 5, 6).—*Four Friends.*

HOMILETICS:—There are two views of this Psalm current amongst Biblical scholars. The one is, that it is a poetic representation of *David as a divinely ordained Ruler and Priest*, and the other is that it is *David's poetic representation of the coming Messiah*. Those who accept and advocate the latter view lay great stress on the circumstance that it is quoted by Christ, also by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and also by Peter. But I think with De Wette these quotations, rightly examined, are not sufficient to sustain this view. However, as I do not regard certitude on either of these points necessary, or easily, if possible, to be attained, the Psalm might, I think, be fairly and usefully employed to illustrate *Christ as the moral Conqueror of mankind*. The Hero here is:—

I. INVESTED WITH DIVINE AUTHORITY. He is commanded by Jehovah Himself to sit on His right hand. "*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand.*" To sit at the right hand of a king, means participation in the dignity of the king himself. Christ is represented as God manifest in the flesh, as One with God, as the beloved Son of Jehovah, as sitting down at the right hand of God, as exalted above all dominion and power, as King of kings, and Lord of lords. His history when on earth confirms this illustrious distinction. How grand were the doctrines which He propounded, how stupendous the miracles He wrought, how unexampled the moral character He exhibited,



how unearthly and transcendent the spirit which He breathed. As a moral Conqueror, He is—

II. ENDOWED WITH DIVINE POWER. “*The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.*” The allusion is here, perhaps, to the rod of Moses, a mighty and mystic wand for the deliverance of the chosen tribe from Egyptian bondage and misery. The rod here is not to be stretched forth, it is a power that comes out of Zion, the spiritual temple, the special residence of God. Christ came out from the heavenly Zion, and came from the heavenly Zion with a rod, the rod of truth and love. This is a far mightier rod than that which Moses wielded, it is a rod that breaks rocky hearts, and makes clear for human souls the way to Canaan. What wonders this rod has done! What greater marvels will it achieve! As a moral Conqueror He is—

III. POSSESSED OF A SPLENDID ARMY. “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning; thou hast the dew of thy youth.*” “Thy people are most willing on thy field day in holy festive garments, out of the morning of the morning’s dawn, cometh the dew of thy young men.”—*Delitzsch*. The words suggest that His army is distinguished: First: By willingness. “*Shall be willing.*” Their services will not be compulsory, they throw themselves into the spirit of the campaign. Secondly: By purity. “*In the beauty of holiness.*” They corruscate with holiness. Thirdly: By youthfulness. “*Thou hast the dew of thy youth.*” They are not old and worn out, they are as fresh as the dew “*from the womb of the morning.*” Fourthly: By abundance. How numerous are drops of “*dew.*” Such is the army of this Hero. Such a Chieftain with such

soldiers, must win victories the most brilliant. As a moral Conqueror He is—

IV. INVESTED WITH A PRIESTLY CHARACTER. “*Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.*” He is a Priest by the solemn and unalterable promise of God. “*The Lord hath sworn and will not repent,*” and that “*after the order, or manner, of Melchizedek.*” Melchizedek was a wonderful priest—original, final, beneficent, and royal. Christ is a Priest-King. As a Priest He is at once the Sacrifice, the Sacrificer, and the Offering. He is the Mediator, *He Himself* is the Atonement, the Reconciliation. As a moral Conqueror He—

V. ACHIEVES MAGNIFICENT TRIUMPHS. He is represented here as making His enemies “*His footstool,*” ruling in “*their midst,*” striking “*through kings,*” crowding the fields or “*places with the dead bodies,*” and as wounding the “*heads over many countries.*” His numerous and ever multiplying victories are moral, not material. They are won not by force, but by love, they do not destroy or injure the conquered, but bless and save them. He fights not against the rights of men, but against their wrongs; not against their enjoyments, but against their afflictions; not against their existence, but against the evils that curse it.

“What wonders shall Thy gospel do!  
Thy converts shall surpass  
The numerous drops of morning dew,  
And own Thy sovereign grace.

God hath pronounced a firm decree,  
Nor changes what He swore;  
Eternal shall Thy priesthood be,  
When Aaron is no more.

Melchizedek, that wondrous priest,  
That king of high degree,  
That holy man whom Abraham blest,  
Was but a type of Thee.”

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

No. CXXI.

### The Day of the Spirit.

"THESE THINGS HAVE I SPOKEN UNTO YOU IN PROVERBS," &c  
(John xvi. 25-28).

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 25.—"*These things.*" — Perhaps the things He had just spoken, beginning at verse 16. "*In Proverbs,*" or, as in margin, parables. "There is a sense," says an able modern expositor, "in which it is necessarily true of all Christ's teaching and indeed of all teaching in words. They are but parables until the truth which they contain has been thought out by the man who hears them. To the disciples much of Christ's teaching remained in a parabolic form until the Spirit came, and uncovered their meaning." "*But the time cometh.*" The time referred to is the time of the

Spirit, the Paraclete who would carry the naked truth into their inmost souls.

Ver. 26. "*At that day ye shall ask in My name, and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you.*" "These words have often been taken to mean, "That I will pray the Father for you is a matter of course of which I need not tell you," but this sense is excluded by the following verse. The thought is rather, "I do not speak of praying for you, because in the presence of the Advocate you will yourselves be able to pray in my name to the Father." His prayer is thought of as not necessary for them, and yet the form of

the words implies that He will pray for them, if it should be needed. While their hearts are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and they maintain communion with the Father, they will need no other advocate, but "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). Compare chapters xiv. 16 and xvii. 9, which refer to the time which precedes the gift of the Holy Ghost."—*H. W. Watkins, M.A.*

Ver. 27. "*The Father Himself loveth you because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.*" The love here of the Father must be something more than

that general philanthropy that embraces the whole human race, for it refers to individual men, and these men are those who loved Christ, and believing, regard Him as coming forth from the Father. The language seems to teach that God has a special love for all those who love His Son, and bless His messenger.

Ver. 28. "*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father.*" He came from the Father to this earth, and He returns to the Father. He came and He goes, for the spiritual restoration of mankind.

HOMILETICS:—The passage suggests a few thoughts concerning the "*day*" of the Spirit, the day here referred to in the expression "*at that day.*" This is a long day, it began on the Pentecost, and runs on through the ages until the "*restitution of all things.*" It is the best day that has dawned on humanity since the fall, better than the day when God "*spake unto the fathers through the prophets,*" running on for forty centuries, better than the day of Christ's personal ministry on the earth. It is a day that will grow brighter and brighter until it floods all souls with the sunshine of infinite love. The prophets call it the "*notable day of the Lord,*" the "*great day of the Lord,*" and sometimes the last day; it is a day in which moral wonders multiply every hour.

There is no day after this, it runs into the endless ages of retribution. Two thoughts are here suggested concerning this day of the Spirit.

I. It is a "day" IN WHICH CHRISTLY TEACHING BECOMES MORE AND MORE INDEPENDENT OF WORDS. "*The time cometh* (that is the day of the Spirit) *when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I* (that is in the Paraclete) *shall show you plainly of the Father.*" Proverbs, words, language, are not truth, at best they are the mere vehicles. They are no more truth than the water pipes are water; the pipes may be broken into atoms, but the waters continue as free and as boundless as ever, and will work their way through other channels. They continue to flow in rivers, bound in oceans, sail in clouds. The Bible itself, even its most inspired utterances, is not *truth*—it is the mere shell, symbol, channel. Christ used words in order to convey truth to His disciples, sometimes His words did convey truths to their spirits, and sometimes they did not. When He says, therefore, "*I will no more speak unto you in proverbs,*" He points to a more direct, more thorough, and more effective way of conveying His truth to human souls, the way in which the Paraclete would do it—bring all things that He had said to their remembrance, make His very "*proverbs*" blaze in their consciousness. He would take the sense out of the sound, the Spirit out of the letter, of even inspired language, and convey them into the inmost depths of their spiritual nature. The men who are most under the influence of this Paraclete are seldom able to trace their most sacred impressions, most devout aspirations, most godly resolves, most elevated experiences to any words, even the words of Christ Himself. "The Comforter, which is the Holy



Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things." "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things." Christ says here, "*I shall show you plainly of the Father.*" To see the Father is to see all truth, and to see that is the supreme necessity of human nature. But how can the Father be plainly shown? Not in words, for no words can reveal the Father. The Father can only be seen with the heart; a loving, pure heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Another thought suggested is:—

II. It is a "day" when FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER BECOMES MORE AND MORE INDEPENDENT OF MEDIATION. Christ seems to say in illustration of this, First: That His disciples in this day will pray in His name, and therefore will not require Him to pray for them. "*At that day ye shall ask in My name.*" He had just before said (ver. 24), "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name." Why? They had not at that time received the Paraclete, but when He came it was stated that they would pray in His name, which means, I presume, that the Spirit would so inspire them with the sentiments and purposes of Christ that they would always pray in the Spirit of Christ, and therefore their prayer would be real and effective. Because of this He says, "*I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you.*" It is not necessary, you will have My Spirit in you, and will pray as I should pray. Christ had prayed for them, and was just about interceding for them again, but after this it is implied that His prayers would be unnecessary. The coming of the Paraclete was, in fact, the *second advent of Himself*. Thus He represents it, "I will not

leave you comfortless, but will come unto you." It is His coming not as at the first, into their sensuous region, but into their spiritual natures, into their souls. Hence His intercession is intercession in their souls, and intercession with them on behalf of the claims of God. "The spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Popular theology represents Christ as engaged in one constant earnest prayer to His Father on behalf of the world, as if His Father's malignity was so deep and strong that it required long ages of Christ's earnest intercession in order to melt His heart into mercy.

"Lift up your eyes to the heavenly seats  
Where your Redeemer stays;  
Kind Intercessor there He sits,  
And loves, and pleads, and prays."

Such sentiments as these are still sung in some so-called churches. Is this a divine fact or a godless fiction? Christ seems to say, Secondly: That His disciples in this day will have such a sense of the Father's love that they will not feel the need of the intercession of others on their behalf. "*For the Father Himself loveth you because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.*"

Observe, incidentally, (1) That God loves men individually. "*The Father Himself loveth you.*" He loves all, but He does not overlook the individual in the millions. His love embraces each, as if the each were the whole. (2) That God loves the individuals especially who love His Son. "*Because ye have loved Me.*" He loves all, whether they love Christ or not, but it would seem from this He has a special love for those who love His Son. In truth no man can love the Father who

does not love the Son, who is His Revealer and Image. And no man who does not love the Father can be conscious of the Father's love for him, and if he is conscious of the Father's love why should he require an intercessor with God to entreat Him to bestow that of which he is in conscious possession? Under the ministry of the Paraclete all Christ's disciples will have the blessed and ever-deepening consciousness that the great Father loves them, and with this consciousness there will be *direct* communion between the Father and His children. Another thought suggested is:—

III. It is a "day" in which CHRIST CAME FROM THE FATHER AND RETURNED TO HIM AGAIN. "*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world and go to the Father.*" He came from the Father as the expression, evidence, and channel of the Father's love for the world, came to reveal the regenerating thoughts, the quickening sympathies, the glorious purposes of that love to estranged humanity, in order to win it back to filial loyalty and unbounded trust. When He had done His work on earth He left a history which constitutes the gospel of the world. He returns to the Father in order that the Paraclete—Himself—may come in spirit to apply effectively that history to the men of all coming times.

CONCLUSION:—Such is the day of the Spirit. How are we using this day? It is the day of grace, the day of salvation.

"Holy Spirit dwell with me,  
 I myself would holy be,  
 Separate from sin I would  
 Choose and cherish all things good;  
 And whatever I can be  
 Give to Him who gave me Thee."

Lynch.

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### SOCIAL QUESTIONS AND THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. \*

“GO, STAND, AND SPEAK IN THE TEMPLE, TO THE PEOPLE, ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE.” *Acts v. 20.*



WHAT, then, is religion, and what is Christianity? Are religion and Christianity a certain number of principles, logically drawn out; a certain number of commands, formally stated; and a certain number of facts placed in their due order? That both religion and Christianity have to do with principles, and commands, and facts, is quite true; but the principles may be believed by the head, without their force being felt by the heart; the commands may be obeyed outwardly, while no love inspires the obedience; and the facts may be seen to be facts, without their having any other place within us than as just so many items in the memory. Let us say that Christianity, which is, after all, but religion in the highest form known to man, is, in its essence, “piety, or a right state of heart towards God, and morality, or right conduct towards our fellow men.” It is, in fact, “being good and doing good.” But, if it be these things, the belief of it, the teaching of it, the listening to its teachings, and the profession of it are not of the slightest avail, except as it is applied to our duties, temptations, dangers, joys, sorrows, indeed to everything which has to do with man within and man without, with man as a physical,

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\* Part of a Sermon delivered in St. John's, late “Free Christian Church,” New Swindon.

mental, moral, and spiritual being. It is quite true that Sunday services should be strictly religious ones ; but they cannot be religious, in the full sense of that term, unless they do really deal with the facts of life, as they lie around us and within us. We need to have our minds trained, to apprehend the truth ; our consciences enlightened, that they may pronounce just judgments ; our affections inspired by the spirit of God, that they may go out towards, and fix themselves upon all things, true, good, beautiful, real, and eternal. We need to be told of dangers, that we may avoid them ; of temptations, that we may overcome them ; of duties, that we may perform them ; of right feelings, that we may cultivate them. But where are all these truths and objects for our judgments, and lives, and hearts ; where are these dangers, and temptations, and duties, but in our everyday lives, and in each particular portion of those lives ? To stand up on a Sunday, and tell a man he is a sinner, is of little avail. He knows the fact, and accepts it, as a matter of course. To speak in such a way, too, as that no one particular person feels himself to be intended, or helped ; what is it, but to “ fight as one that beateth the air,” and to deal with abstractions, instead of applying Christianity to particular cases and circumstances ? Every day, every hour, every moment, souls are being tried and tempted, souls are rising and falling, souls are being ruined and saved, in the very midst of politics, and commerce, and trade, and work-day work, and domestic concerns ; while as for the passions and appetites, there never was a time in England when they were so much abused, and produced such deadly evils as they do now. The “ fleshly lusts that war against the soul,” work in the most varied and revolting



forms. The extent of those forms of evil no statistics can tell; but they are at work among both sexes, among all ages, with the single and the married, the professor and the profane, the minister and the hearer, the church officer and the private church member; while as to the effects which the abuses of the appetites and passions cause, what are they? They cause a general depravation of our entire nature; they bring, sooner or later, self-reproach; they entail great and needless expense; they involve men in poverty and crime; they produce, and perpetuate the most loathsome diseases; they are the occasion of so many early deaths; so many spurious offspring; so many disfigured beings; so much irritability of temper, and defect of memory, and the shyness which fears to look another straight in the face; and low vulgar ideas of woman; and worse than all, loss of God; for the words are eternally true that the "pure in heart," and they alone, "shall," or can "see God."

Now, if these things really are so, not as fictions of my imagination, but as facts of human life, and if religion be man's true friend and sufficient helper, it must deal with these things, not in the general, but in detail. It must come to each individual, and speak to him of *his* particular duty, *his* temptation, *his* trial, *his* wrong doing, *his* virtues, *his* vices: it must do as Nathan did with respect to David, say, "*Thou* art the man;" or as Ehud said to Eglon, King of Moab, "I have a message from God unto *thee*." You may speak to people for ever about chastity, and virtue in general; and many of them will still continue to be decent gluttons and refined sensualists all the while. You may tell men that they should be truthful, obedient to

conscience, just, good, and virtuous, in all the affairs of life, and they will bow their heads in assent ; while all the time they will go on violating the laws of virtue and truth as circumstances may arise. No, friends, the teachings of the pulpit, if they are to be of any good at all, must aim to promote man's good as a whole ; and his good as a whole lies in the life which he lives, and the state of heart which he cherishes. And the pulpit can help him to attain this good, only as it applies Christian principles to the small and minute details of existence. If we wish our Sunday services to give us mere comfort, to tranquilize our nerves, and to allow us to indulge in the luxury of mere religious feeling, such results may easily be attained. But if we ought to look upon the worship and instruction of the "day of rest," as only a means to an end, not *the* end itself, as a help towards our being more just, more true, more self-denying, in a word, more Christ-like ; then that worship and instruction must be applied to our individual cases, and to the details of each man's case. What did Christ and His immediate successors do ? *They* spoke to the domestic, social, and political, as well as theological condition of their day. *They* did not teach Christianity as though it were some bony "skeleton," to be covered over by a number of smooth phrases ; but as having to do with the home, the workshop, the "receipt of custom," the street, the market, the political governments of the hour, and the controversies into which men were then plunged, and in which they found so much of their constant interest, and when *I* speak to you of politics, when *I* use political terms, when *I* warn you against all bodily uncleanness, when *I* speak to you of the simplest details of your home

life, and your home work, it is not as a political partisan, or because I am fond of allusion to sensual matters; but because I would humbly follow, at a humble distance, your Master and mine; and if I am doing wrong, it is *His* example which has all along misled me.

Friends, the pulpit *is* a Divine institution; but like other things Divine, it is so only as it renders real service to the world, and helps man to "be good, and to do good." Day by day the pulpit is rapidly falling in the estimation of thousands, and failing to secure for its utterances the reverent respect which was once accorded to it. And why? Because it is being felt by the cream of the working classes, to whom life and the struggle for existence are at least palpable realities; and quite as much by the thoughtful and educated, because it does not always speak the language of to-day, nor address itself to the living wants of the living hour; and that while priests are settling some abstruse dogma, or some antique form, men and women are all around them asking for light, for guidance, for help, for strength, for reproof, for the application of God's gift of religion to man's most real and hourly needs. If we, as ministers, will continue to keep up, with such severe exactness, the old distinctions between, "the secular and the sacred," "the world and the Church," and "business and religion," I know what will follow. The great masses of the people will go their way, and leave us to go our way; and we shall have at last to confess with regret and shame, that we have failed the people in their hour of need, and when that need was the most pressing.

FREDERIC ROWLAND YOUNG.

## STORMING THE KINGDOM.

“AND FROM THE DAYS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST UNTIL NOW, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SUFFERETH VIOLENCE, AND THE VIOLENT TAKE IT BY FORCE.” *Matt. xi. 12.*



HE ministry of John the Baptist inaugurated a new era in the history of the kingdom of heaven. During its days, men were called to repent, because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. With fiery earnestness the Baptist urged men to get into a right attitude towards God, that they might enter into, and become in harmony with, the laws and king of the new dispensation. In the spirit and power of Elijah, the prophet of fire, John had stirred his hearers to press toward the kingdom with holy violence, and to push their way into it with moral force. Till the advent and preaching of John, men had been quietly hoping, and looking for the predicted kingdom; but now, with emphatic and demonstrative tones, the last and greatest of the prophets, moved the people to enthusiastic expectancy, and immediate, energetic effort. Christ pronounced His approval of the vigorous preaching of John, and of the mighty influence it produced upon the hearts and minds of his hearers; for, “the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence,” is worthy of, and approves it, “and the violent,” are rewarded and encouraged in their violence, for they are permitted to “take it by force.” These words of our Lord declare—

*I. That the preaching of John the Baptist awakened among men earnest and enthusiastic action concerning the kingdom of heaven.*

The accounts we have of the preaching of John, show that he spoke with great earnestness and power. The

stern-looking man of the desert, in his strange attire, made the wilderness of Judea echo with his loud and repeated summons to repent, as he spake of the winnowing fan, and the unquenchable fire. The voice of prophecy had been hushed for four hundred years, and now that the long silence is broken, and with such ringing and rousing tones, the people cannot but be awakened and alarmed, and desire "to flee from the wrath to come." When the voice of John was hushed in death, Jesus came forth from His seclusion, and resumed the soul-stirring ministry of His forerunner, calling upon men to repent, but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. In the preaching of Christ men were taught that they must agonise to enter the straight gate and narrow way that leadeth to the kingdom. Christianity did not try to palm itself upon men while they were in a state of stupor, or without challenging earnestness and enquiry. Men were to forsake wrong doing, and with righteous and resolute spirits lay hold on the blessings associated with the new kingdom. The preaching of John and Jesus inaugurated an era which should be characterised by the exhibition on the part of man, of unusual energetic moral purpose, and on the part of God of unusual spiritual power.

II.—*That the kingdom of heaven approvingly permitted such energetic and enthusiastic action on the part of man.* It was of transcendent importance that men should leave the burdensome ritual and cumbersome ceremonialism of the old economy, and enter into the liberty wherewith Christ could make them free, and that they should do so, with all their heart and soul and strength. (a) *The kingdom was worthy of such con-*



*separation of spirit, and concentration of energy.* (β) *Only by exhibiting such earnestness, could men show that they appreciated the kingdom.* (γ) *To ignore and despise the kingdom, was to become self-excluded from the best and brightest blessings earth can enjoy, or heaven bestow.* In the kingdom of heaven the soul becomes subject to the will of Christ, and moulded into His image; that, transformed into His likeness here, it may be translated into His presence hereafter. Becoming a subject of the kingdom of heaven—with Christ enthroned in the heart—there follow pardon, peace, purity, and joy in the Holy Ghost, a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Such blessings are worthy of the ambition of any man, and no wonder God permits men to be violent in the pursuit of them, and to take them by force. Heaven looks approvingly upon those who are intensely in earnest in seeking the the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

III.—*That only by such energetic and enthusiastic action can the kingdom of heaven be taken and kept.*

To enter any realm of earthly blessedness care must be taken and energy put forth. The kingdom of learning suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force; only the resolute and resistless win the day in the battle of life. This is pre-eminently true in divine things. (α) *In entering the kingdom of heaven energy has to be exerted.* When the soul is convinced of sin, and the eye of faith first catches a glimpse of the cross, what effort is required to banish pride and unbelief, and to draw near with humility and faith to the Saviour. (β) *In holding the kingdom,* conversion is only the beginning of the Christian life, the trumpet call to battle; and all through his subsequent career, the

believer has to contend violently and valiantly with temptation and hindrances, lest the tempter get advantage over him. Bunyan has given us an admirable illustration of the energy required to enter upon the Christian life, and to take possession of the kingdom of heaven. In one of the scenes in the house of the interpreter a man of great resolution cuts his way through great opposition, and succeeds in entering the palace. And in the "Holy War," we are taught what energy and effort are required to retain our hold upon the kingdom of heaven. That the kingdom of heaven may come in the world, as well as in our hearts, energetic effort is required and expected. The conquest of the world for Christ, will not be achieved by the unaided might and power of man; but man must do his best, and exert himself to the utmost with the tongue of fire, and the pen, which is mightier than the sword. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan and of sin. We are permitted to wrestle violently, as Jacob did: to cry loudly as the blind man did to our Lord; and to be in red-hot earnest to resist the devil, and grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

To possess this burning energy, and flaming zeal, that the kingdom of heaven may come in our hearts, and be extended in the world, *we must receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and of fire.* Then shall we be *strong in prayer* to besiege the throne of the heavenly grace; *strong in purpose* to resist temptation, and eschew every false way; our life will not be a meaningless and puny thing, wasted and withered by malignant breath, but full of moral violence and resistless spiritual force, and at last, we shall come off more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us.

F. W. BROWN.

## *Germes of Thought.*

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### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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#### Love to Christ, and its Blessedness.

"JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HIM, IF A MAN LOVE ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS; AND MY FATHER WILL LOVE HIM, AND WE WILL COME UNTO HIM, AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM."—*John* xiv. 23.

THE Lord Jesus had been speaking to the disciples about His departure to the Father, and of His manifestation to them. The disciples could not understand why the world would be excluded from this manifestation; so Judas, not the Iscariot, asked, "How is it that Thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" No other reply

could be given to that question but the words of the text.

I. THAT LOVE TO CHRIST MUST GOVERN THE HEART OF MAN BEFORE HE CAN HAVE A FULL MANIFESTATION OF HIM.

1. We can have no true conception of the Person of Christ without love to Him. The world, not possessing this love, knew Him only as the son of Joseph; therefore they could have no manifestation of Him during the forty days after His resurrection. Love has the power of finding out all things connected with the person loved. So the love

of the Christian enables him to have a true conception of the God-man Christ Jesus. The intellect, the reason, alone cannot fathom this depth; a heart filled with love will understand the incarnation better than a highly trained intellect without love. 2. We cannot rightly interpret His doctrines unless we love Him. "*He will keep my words.*" Those outside the circle of Christ's fellowship were startled by His words; those persons, sent by the authorities to arrest the Saviour, returned without Him, saying, "Never man spake like this man." The testimony of the public was "He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes." However they did not understand His teaching. Even the disciples, at this time, had only just crossed the boundary of divine truth, they could interpret only a sentence here and there

of the marvellous teachings of their Master. After the crucifixion their love would become purer and stronger, all the earthliness would be removed, so they would be able to understand the spirit of His doctrines. To the stranger the mutterings of the child are unintelligible, but the love of the mother has attached a certain meaning to every sound, and to every sign made by the child. Our love to Christ enables us to ascertain the definite, practical meaning and spirit of His teaching. Love can bring us nearer to Christ than any other power can; under its influence, John was not awed in the presence of the Creator of the universe, but calmly laid his head down on His bosom. If at any time we feel a desire to ask a bold question of our Father, it is under the influence of love it can be done. 3. Love is

the highest qualification for Christian work.

It is one thing to have an intelligent perception of the words of Christ, and another to *keep* His words. It may be that many who profess Christ think that the work in which they are engaged is something different and apart from that into which He threw His heart and soul when here on the earth. Still it is to be the same. And its principal characteristic is love. Was it not His love that enabled Him to wash the apostles' feet; to go about doing good; to endure poverty and scorn; and at last to die on the cross? We are to labour on the same spiritual plane. Animated by love nothing will be considered too humiliating for us to do for the sake of others; no amount of persecution will turn us from the path of duty; and our bodies, souls and spirits will be

given as living sacrifices to God. The life and reality of all Christian service is supreme love to the Son of God.

II. THAT THOSE WHO POSSESS THIS LOVE ARE LOVED OF GOD. "My Father will love him." The Lord Jesus knew what that love was in all its fulness, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands." And He speaks of that love as the greatest blessing which a man can have. A good man will show his love in various ways to his workmen, and to his neighbours, but if you want to know something of the fulness of the man's heart, you must follow him to his family, it is to the children the strongest manifestations are given. God's love gives a heavenly love to all His works, all His creatures are the recipients of His infinite goodness. But His special love is revealed only to



those who love the Son. This special love flows a clear, deep river under the old dispensation, passing by the houses of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, David and the prophets. It still flows on under the new dispensation refreshing the thirsty spirits of the saints. It is a great blessing for a man to be within the circle of this special love of the Father.

1. Inasmuch as he will enjoy constant fellowship with God. 2. Inasmuch as he will obtain the required supplies from God. "And we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The Son and the Father will enter the loving spirit

and make their abode there. It will not be a temporary visit, but a constant perpetual home. We are constantly in need, for the wear and tear on the way to heaven is great. The frequent engagements with the enemy of our souls exhaust the supplies daily. But fresh supplies are daily received by those who love Christ. Wherever God is in His love there is an abundance of spiritual supplies. Man must remain poor and miserable until his heart becomes the home of God. Is there a spark of love in the heart towards the Son? Nourish it till it becomes a flame.

*London.*      CYMRO.

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### The Great Gulf Fixed.

"BETWEEN US AND YOU THERE IS A GREAT GULF FIXED." *Luke* xvi. 26.

The text is an extract from one of the most re-

markable and thrillingly impressive parables ever conceived. It is in fact a picture drawn by an infallible artist of a large,

wealthy, and terribly sad family. It is a family painting. Mark the leading features of this family as they are here portrayed. First. It was a *wealthy* family. "*Wore purple and fared sumptuously every day.*" They were probably the great magnates of the neighbourhood. Secondly: It was a *large* family. There were six brothers, no sister appears on the painting, the parents perhaps were gone. Thirdly: It was a family which *death* had visited. "*The rich man died and was buried.*" Death will neither be bribed away by wealth, or wait for preparation. Fourthly: It was a family *one of whom was in hell*. "*In hell (or Hades) he lift up his eyes, being in torments.*" Whilst you see here man in the lowest poverty rising to the highest moral position,—Lazarus is borne to Abraham's bosom,—we also see a man with the greatest wealth

sinking into the depths of moral perdition. Secular poverty is often moral soul-lifting, and secular wealth soul-degrading. Fifthly: It was a family *whose surviving brothers were on the road to ruin*. "*Lest they also come.*" The five who were left behind were following in the moral march of the one who had gone to hell. Sixthly: It was a family whose *deceased brother recoiled at the idea of a re-union*. The one in hell dreaded the sight of the five brethren he left behind, and he invokes Abraham to prevent it. Sin is de-sociating, more de-humanising. Seventhly: It was a family who *possessed all the means they needed, or would ever have, for spiritual salvation*. "*They had Moses and the prophets.*" \*

Now concerning the

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\* For amplification of this subject see "Homilist," Vol. iv., p. 47.

great “*gulf*” that is fixed. “The scene” says a modern expositor, “brought before us is like one of the pictures of Dante’s *Commedia*—steep rocks and a deep gorge, and on one side the flames that burn and do not consume, and on the other the fair garden of Paradise and the kingly palace, and the banquet at which Abraham presides. And those that are bearing the penalty, or reaping the reward, of their life are within sight and hearing of each other, and hold conversation and debate.” Now there is a threefold “*gulf*” that divides men, which may be designated the *temperamental*, the *psychological*, and the *moral*. Notice—

I. THE TEMPERAMENTAL “*gulf*.” There seems to be in the physical, or animal, nature of every man certain affinities which attract some, and antipa-

thies which repel others. We think we observe this even in birds of the same brood, and cattle of the same parentage. Like the inorganic universe, each seems to be charged with the repulsive and attractive force. We enter a social circle for the first time. There may be some score or more assembled together for social festivity and converse. To some we are instinctively attracted, from others we instinctively recoil. Whilst we crave a closer contact with some, we desire a remoter distance from others. They of course feel the same in relation to us. We cannot help it, neither can they. It is constitutional. There is *between us a “great gulf fixed.”* They cannot pass to us, nor we to them. This temperamental gulf explains: First: Much of the *matrimonial misery in life*. No one can read the

journals of the day, or studiously observe the phenomena of domestic life without being struck with the prevalence of matrimonial unhappiness. Two persons are brought together who have no compatibility of temperament, who lack the mutual affinities one for another. Monetary or family considerations artificially bridge the natural gulf at first, so that the parties have been brought together and wedded by law. This temperamental gulf explains, Secondly, Much of the *national dissension that prevails*. It would be almost impossible for a warm Hibernian to blend with a cold Caledonian, or for the active and brilliant Frank to blend with the dull and dreamy Turk. The attempt to bring them under one rule has never resulted in perfect harmony, and never will. "All flesh is not the same

flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds." Can the fish, the beast, or the bird ever co-mingle or blend together? There are fishymen—cold, slimy, from whose touch you recoil. There are beastal men, gross and coarse. There are those of the bird temperament, with a genius that bears them upwards. You cannot mix them. "*Between them there is a great gulf fixed.*" This temperamental gulf, explains, Thirdly: The *obligation of social forbearance*. "*Bear one another's burden.*" Let each respect the other's temperamental idiosyncrasies, and we should soon learn that conduct which is vile in one is almost venial in another. Let each keep his own side of the gulf, move in his own orbit, and do not attempt to span it. Every man in his own

order, and every man in his own orbit. Notice—

II. The PSYCHOLOGICAL “gulf.” There is such a diversity in the natural proclivities and tastes, as well as acquired thoughts and habits of the mind, that they create a fixed gulf between men. “How can two walk together unless they be agreed?” What communion can the idealess have with the advanced scientist, the self-seeking with the generous philanthropist, the stolid and unsusceptible with the sensitive and the tender, the intolerant bigot with the truly œcumenic, the grossly materialistic with the divinely spiritual? This gulf explains two things: First. The philosophy of *religious sects*. What is reasonable to one class of religionists is absurdity to another, what is gospel to one is blasphemy to another. A sermon that is great to one is contemptible to

another. This gulf explains:—Secondly: The philosophy of *social caste*. Social caste not only exists in heathen lands, but in Christendom as well. Aye, it is rife in England to-day. What is the gulf that divides the titled and the wealthy from free and friendly intercourse with the untitled and the poor? False ideas of greatness, nothing more. So long as men are such fools as to believe that there is greatness in high sounding titles, in a long ancestry, and in material possessions, this gulf will continue. “*There is a great gulf fixed.*”

This gulf is not so fixed as the former. We cannot change our temperaments, but we *can* change our mental condition. The rude may become learned, the stolid may grow tender, the selfish may become generous, the bigoted may become Catholic, and thus



their minds may reach a common level, blend in common converse, and unite in a common enterprise. But at present the gulf seems "*fixed*." Notice—

III. The MORAL "gulf."  
A diversity of moral character constitutes a gulf or a chasm that must ever divide spirit from spirit. All moral character is built on one of two foundations, that of self-seeking, or that of disinterested love. The one is moulded after the "image of Adam," the other after the "image of Christ." Selfishness is the essence of all sin, the root of all depravity, the fountain of all misery. Disinterested love is the soul of all virtue, and the source of all happiness. Between these two characters there is a mutual antagonism. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light

with darkness? These two characters are so divided that one cannot "pass" to the other. The one like Lazarus is ascending, the other, like the rich man, is descending. The one is going; going now, step by step, with every sin, into "*everlasting punishment*." The other is also going, step by step, with every holy act, into "*life eternal*." Thus the gulf is widening. I offer two remarks concerning this gulf. First: That this gulf *can and should be removed while here*. This gulf consisting in moral character is self-created. God did not create it. The corrupt character can be changed here. It has been in thousands of instances, is being changed now, and will continue to be changed to the end of time. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived;

neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed," &c. Yes, not only *can* be changed, but *should* be. "Let the wicked forsake his ways," &c. Secondly: This gulf may *perhaps* be

*fixed for ever in the future state.* I say, perhaps, for of this who is certain? The Bible itself has left it in haze, and wisely and beneficently so.

CONCLUSION : — Sinner, would you remove the gulf that separates you from the truly good here, and in all worlds, and from your blessed Maker, too? Then "turn from your evil ways, make you a clean heart; repent, and be converted."

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### Eternity in Man.

"HE HATH SET THE WORLD IN THEIR HEART."—*Eccles.* iii. 11.

IN one of the earlier volumes of "The Homilist,"\* a discourse of mine appeared on these words, but having recently seen

a new rendering, which I am disposed to accept, I append the present sketch. The new rendering substitutes "eternity"† for "world," and the idea is that God has set *eternity*

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. xviii., page 241.

† The Hebrew, "*olam*," is elsewhere translated in upwards of 200 cases "for ever," and several times "perpetual," "everlasting," "alway," and "evermore," "eternal."

*in the heart of man.*

That which we call mind or soul in man, though finite, is made for the infinite, though in time is made for eternity. This *eternity* in the soul explains many points. It explains :—

I. Its sense of the EMP-  
TINESS OF ALL MUNDANE  
THINGS. Deep and uni-  
versal is the feeling in  
man of the unsatisfactori-  
ness and vanity of all  
worldly things. “Vanity  
of vanities” is breathed  
in its sighs and muttered  
in its groans. Though a  
man like Solomon accu-  
mulates immense wealth,  
procures all that money  
can purchase to delight  
the taste, charm the im-  
agination, and surround  
the senses with Elysian  
transports, though he at-  
tained rich stores of varied  
knowledge, though he run  
the whole round of world-  
ly pleasures, a deep sense  
of the emptiness of all  
presses upon him, and he

sighs out, “Vanity of  
vanities.” Why is this?  
Eternity is in him, and  
the eternal existent yearns  
for the eternal things.  
This *eternity* within him  
gives him an unquench-  
able thirst, an inexhausti-  
ble capacity. No more  
can the world satisfy what  
is in man than a dew  
drop can quench the burn-  
ing thirst of a lion. Its  
unbroken and unsilence-  
able cry after it has re-  
ceived all the world can  
give, is, “More, more.”  
This eternity in the soul  
explains :—

II. Its CONSCIOUSNESS OF  
THE UNSTABILITY OF ALL  
THINGS CONNECTED WITH OUR  
EARTHLY LIFE. The sense  
of mutation rests con-  
stantly and heavily on the  
soul. Scarcely a day  
passes that it is not ex-  
cited into almost a passion  
of sadness. But this  
sense could not exist if  
there was not something  
in us, that is unchanged  
and unchanging. We

feel that we are changing, and that the universe is changing, because there is something fixed, deep, and ineradicable in the centre of our being. As that rock, which lifts its majestic head above the ocean, and alone remains unmoved amidst the restless waves, and the passing fleets, is the only measure to the voyager of all that moves on the great world of waters, so the sense of the immutable, which heaven has planted in our souls, is the standard by which alone we become conscious of the mutation of our earthly life. If all the objects within our horizon moved with equal speed, and we moved with them, what idea should we have of motion? None. This eternity in the soul explains:—

III. ITS YEARNING TO LOOK INTO THE INVISIBLE. Inquiry into the *reason of things* is a deep and re-

sistless instinct. In the child it is called curiosity, in the man, the philosophic spirit. But the reason of things is behind this sense, it is in the region of the invisible, and the invisible is the eternal. “*The things that are seen are temporal, and the things that are not seen are eternal.*” Whatever you see is temporal; though fixed as the mountains, boundless as the ocean, and multitudinous as the orbs of heaven, they are temporal. But that which produces all, and rules all that you see, that is eternal. I see not my soul, and that is eternal, and its inquiries are after the eternal. This eternity in the soul explains:—

IV. ITS CONSTANT ANTICIPATIONS OF THE FUTURE. Its past is gone, however long and eventful it might have been. Gone as a vision of the night. To the future it looks, on-

ward is its anxious glance. It "never is, but always to be blessed." "To-morrow and to-morrow." As the little rivulet that breaks out from some lofty hill, a thousand leagues away from the sea, has within it some mystic force that prevents it from resting until it has found its home in its mother sea, so the soul rests not till it finds its home in the eternal. This eternity in the soul explains:—

V. ITS INEXHAUSTIBILITY BY ITS PRODUCTIONS. The more the fruitful tree produces, the less it will produce in the future, and it will at last exhaust itself by its productions. Not so with the soul. The more fruit it yields, the more fecundant it becomes. The more a man thinks the more capable he is of thinking; the more he loves, the deeper becomes the fountains of affection

within him. This eternity in the soul explains:—

VI. ITS UNIVERSAL YEARNING FOR A GOD. Some one has called man a "religious animal." Everywhere man is in search for God in some form or other. "*My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Oh, that I knew where I might find him.*" "Thou hast made us, oh Lord," said St. Augustine, "for thyself and our hearts are restless till they rest in thee." "Man as a race," says Canon Liddon, "is like those captains of whom we read, more than once, in history, that once having believed a throne to be within their grasp, they never could settle down again quietly, as contented subjects. Man as man has a profound, an ineradicable instinct of his splendid destiny. He knows that the objects which meet his eye, that the average words



which fall upon his ear, that the common thoughts and purposes and passions which haunt his heart and his brain, are very far indeed from being adequate to his real capacity." He wants God, nothing less than God Himself. This eternity in the soul explains:—

VII. ITS ABIDING SENSE OF PERSONAL IDENTITY. The old man who has passed through a long life of great changes, and whose bodily frame, too, has been several times exchanged, has, notwithstanding, an ineradicable belief that he is the same person as when a boy at school. He has no doubt

of it. The successive bodies which he has worn through his long life, have mingled with other bodies, in the forms of plants, sentient life or both, but he himself has remained distinct from all. Bodies may be lost in bodies, but souls never lost in souls. Why this? It is because there is eternity in us.

CONCLUSION:—If, then, eternity is in us, if our personality is unchanging, indestructible, allied to the invisible and eternal, physical death is but a small matter after all, it is but the changing of the soul's residence, the soul's clothing.

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INTEMPERANCE.—One whose great thoughts never soar higher than a hot dinner o' Sundays, or a pipe and pot in the tap room o' nights! One could verily weep at such pictures of stagnant power, undeveloped excellence, imbruted virtue, stifled genius, what to many thousand might be contrasted with what they are! When shall we see the last of Esau selling his birthright for a mess of pottage? Truly there are demoniacal possessions still, and the Ginfiend is about the worse of them. To him, many a soul is given over, bound hand and foot.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fullness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

## No. XI.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S HIGHER LIFE.

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. SET YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE, NOT ON THINGS ON THE EARTH. FOR YE ARE DEAD, AND YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD. WHEN CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, SHALL APPEAR, THEN SHALL YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY."—*Col.* iii. 1-4.

OUR text gives us a magnificent picture of the higher life of man, indicating the means of its beginning, the signs of its progress, and the hope of its perpetuity. We have here—

I. THE EXPERIENCES OF THE BEGINNING OF THE HIGHER LIFE. These initial experiences are spoken of under the three allied figures of death, the hiding as of burial, and

resurrection. There is an experience (1) *as of death*. "Ye have died." The soul as it becomes Christian passes through a death with Christ; ( $\alpha$ ) a death to sin; ( $\beta$ ) a death to the bondage of outwardness. Dead, yet alive! The paradox that finds its counterpart in the gardener's insertion of the vine shoot, that was cut off, and so dead to its old stock, under the bark of

the living vine ; (2) as of *hiding away* in burial.

“Hid.” That may mean (a) what is concealed now will be revealed by-and-bye; or ( $\beta$ ) it may denote a life of much blessed solitude, and so of sacred seclusion; or ( $\gamma$ ) it may mean a life of fellowship with the hidden Christ; or ( $\delta$ ) it may tell of a life whose purposes and inspirations are hid in God. There is an experience (3) *as of resurrection*.

“Risen.” That must indicate (a) a living life. Such a life as Ezekiel portrays, “I will open your graves and give you a new heart, a heart of flesh, and ( $\beta$ ) an elevated life. No more of the earth, earthy—no more grave clothes, sepulchre and earth worms, but such beauty and activity, and blessedness, as belong to the scenes of Christ’s forty days’ risen life.

II. THE DUTY OF THE HIGHER LIFE. The duty

is twofold, and the way of obeying is twofold, too.

(1) *The twofold duty of the higher life.* (a) *The withdrawal of chief concern from inferior things.*

“Set not your affections,” &c. Does not this mean, cease to entwine your affections round the things of time; cease to concentrate your energies on the things of this world? So far we have only the negative aspect of duty, but there is ( $\beta$ ) *The fixing of chief interest on superior things.* They are twice spoken of here as “things above;” and may they not denote what is above socially, intellectually, spiritually.

(2) *The twofold method of attaining the performance of this duty.* (a) “Seek the things that are above.” Let the higher things be the object of pursuit. What higher things? Plato would have said, the true, the beautiful, the good. Most modern

Christians, meaning the same, would have said heaven. And Paul, meaning the same, would have said Christ. For surely Christ is heaven, and heaven is Christ. Well, therefore, does Bishop Pearson urge, "Rise to Christ with the wings of your meditation, and in the chariot of your affections." ( $\beta$ ) "Set your affections on things that are above." Not only seek heaven, but think heaven; not only think heaven, but love heaven. Our life cannot rise into a higher realm of itself, any more than a bar of iron can lift itself. Both have capacity of response. Christ is the magnet to uplift our natures. Love Him, and the love of Him lifts up.

III.—THE DESTINY OF THE HIGHER LIFE. In the fourth verse we have the onward aspect of the higher life. (1) *There is to be a complete manifestation of this higher life.* Paul has

said now it is "hid," then it will be unveiled; now it is buried, then it will be "risen." Because of misunderstandings, and misconceptions, and harsh judgments of others, the "higher life" is now often hid, then all will be explained, interpreted, rectified. Because now that life is so often in itself distorted, confused, it is partially "hid," then in ease, and naturalness, and grace, it will gloriously "appear." (2) *The perfect revelation of this life will be in perfect union with Christ.* (1) *How?* Because He is the origin and sustenance; the life of man's own inner higher life. (2) *When?* No calendar can fix the date. It will be the time of His appearing; and that will be to the ages as His incarnation was, "the fulness of the times." (3) *What?* The glory we shall have will be His glory. That is the glory

of purity, simplicity, victory, sacrifice, love. The paragraph we have thus considered, names Christ four times. Our model is Christ's death; our strength is Christ's risen life; our Heaven is Christ's glory; our hope is Christ's coming.

"Yea, thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning, He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed :  
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,  
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ."

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

Bristol.

## Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle :—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Caesar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

### No. IV.

THE AUGMENTATION OF  
CHRISTLY LOVE INSURES THE  
IMPROVEMENT OF THE  
WHOLE MAN.

"AND THIS I PRAY, THAT YOUR LOVE MAY ABOUND YET MORE AND MORE IN KNOWLEDGE AND IN ALL JUDGMENT; THAT YE MAY APPROVE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT; THAT YE MAY BE SINCERE

AND WITHOUT OFFENCE TILL THE DAY OF CHRIST; BEING FILLED WITH THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH ARE BY JESUS CHRIST, UNTO THE GLORY AND PRAISE OF GOD." *Phil.* i. 9-11.

Here again the Apostle prays that that love for Christ, which they had shown in their deep,



generous, and practical sympathy for him as Christ's minister, might not merely continue, but abound yet more and more "The original verb here," says Dr. Barry, "signifies to overflow, a sense which our word 'abound' properly has, but has in general usage partially lost; and St. Paul's meaning clearly is that love shall not only primarily fill the heart, but overflow in secondary influence on the spiritual understanding."

The words suggest that the *augmentation of Christly love insures the improvement of the whole man.* It secures

I. The improvement of the INTELLECT. It promotes, First: *Knowledge.* "And this I pray that your love may abound in knowledge." *Epignosei.* The knowledge here must be regarded as spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of God in Christ. "Here St. Paul singles out the kind of love—the enthusiasm of love to God and man, which he knew that the Philippians had—and prays that it may overflow from the emotional to the intellectual element of their nature, and become, as we constantly see that it does become, in simple and loving characters, a means of spiritual insight in knowledge and all 'judgment,' or rather, all perception." Love is the inspiration of all true

knowledge. As we love an object, the more stimulus has the intellect to inquire into everything concerning it or him. The more love for God abounds, the more earnest will the intellect be in "inquiring in His temple," and the universe. It promotes, Secondly: *Perception.* "And in all judgment." *Aisthesei.* This means, perhaps, discernment or insight. There is evidently a distinction between mere intelligence and intuition. I may know all the facts of a man's life, and yet not possess that insight into his inner springs of action necessary to understand him. There are great technical theologians, who lack the spiritual eye to peer into the underlying, eternal, principles of truth. It is love that opens and quickens this eye of "judgment," or spiritual discrimination. It promotes, Thirdly: *Shrewdness.* "That ye may approve things that are excellent," margin, "that ye may try things that differ." Shrewdness is that faculty in the mind which enables a man almost without the use of the critical power to see the *reality* under all the forms with which it is invested. There are many intelligent men; men, too, of intuition, who are not shrewd, not quick and accurate in the discernment of the worth of

things. Now, love to God promotes this intellectual shrewdness of soul, the shrewdness that guards it from all imposture. This is an age in which men talk much of intellectual improvement, and numerous mechanical methods are proposed. But here is the infallible one. Let men's love to God abound more and more, and all the wheels of intellect will be set agoing. This Christly love secures

II. The improvement of the CONSCIENCE. Here the language of the text implies that this love improves the conscience. First: By *giving it a sympathy with the true only*. "Things that are excellent." The original constitution of conscience was to do this evermore. It does this in heaven, it once, perhaps, did this on earth; but now, alas, throughout the greater portion of the race in all lands, its sympathies are not with "the things that are excellent." So awfully has it been corrupted that it yields its concurrence to idolatry, cruelty, priestcrafts, frauds, and falsehoods of endless kinds. When true love to God acts upon it, nothing but "the things that are excellent" will do for it; it rejects, spurns, and damns all others. This love improves the conscience, Secondly :

By *making it thoroughly sincere*. "That ye may be sincere," *Eilikrineis*. This word is only used here, and in 2 Pet. i. 3: and the corresponding substantive "sincerity," in 1 Cor. v. 8, 2 Cor. i. 12, and 2 Cor. ii. 17. It signifies purity tested and found clear of all base mixtures, a genuine, incorruptible conscience, a conscience that leads a man to sacrifice all he has, even life itself, rather than swerve an iota from the right and the true. Love to God promotes such a conscience. It did so with the apostles, with all the holy martyrs, and with the Divine Man Himself. This love improves the conscience, Thirdly: By *securing it from blameableness*. "Without offence." In Acts we read of a "conscience void of offence towards God and man." It is essential that such a conscience should rule the entire man, and that itself should be ruled by the will of the great God. According to the law of mind, the object we love most, becomes our moral monarch: when God becomes the paramount object of our affection, He becomes the Ruler of our conscience. This state of conscience is to be "till the day of Christ." It does not mean that it will end afterwards, but that after that it is sure

to be perpetuated. This Christly love secures—

III. The improvement of the LIFE. "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness," &c. Paul's language in Rom. vi. 22, may be taken as a commentary on this expression. "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end, everlasting life." Observe, First: That a righteous life *comes to us through Christ*. "The fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ." Men are only made morally right by faith in Christ. Philosophically there is no other way of doing so. Christ came into the world to make man morally right, or, to use old Testament language, to establish rectitude or judgment on the earth. Observe, Secondly: That a righteous life *redounds to the glory of God*. "Unto the glory and praise of God."

It is the highest manifestation of God, it is God "manifested in the flesh." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

But the "fruits of righteousness," or a righteous life, are ensured only by the abounding and the overflowing of love to God in the soul. All must be love. Love is not only the inspiration of God, the root of the universe, but the fountain of all virtue and happiness. Let love, then, abound.

"Love is the root of Creation: God's essence; worlds without number, Lie in His bosom like children; He made them for this purpose only, Only to love and to be loved again, He breathed forth His Spirit Into the slumbering dust, and upright standing, it laid its Hand on its heart, and felt it was warm, with a flame out of heaven."

—Longfellow.

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MUSIC.—Music is well said to be the speech of angels, in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man, is felt to be so divine. It brings us near to the Infinite, we look for moments across the cloudy elements into the eternal sea of light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of nature, have prized song and music as the highest, as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

# Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCXXXIV.

## True Soul Light.

“FOR GOD, WHO COMMANDED THE LIGHT TO SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS, HATH SHINED IN OUR HEARTS TO GIVE THE LIGHT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF GOD, IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST.”—2 Cor. iv. 6.

There are two lights in the soul. There is the “*light of nature*.” This light consists of those moral intuitions which heaven implanted within us at first. These intuitions are good enough for angels, did for Adam before he fell, but now, through sin, they are so blunt and dim that the soul is in moral darkness, “the light that is in thee is darkness.” The other light is that of the *light of the Gospel*. This comes because the light of nature is all but gone out, and comes as essential to our spiritual well-being. This is the light to which the passage refers, the new soul light. The words call attention to three facts concerning it. I. It EMANATES FROM THE HIGHEST SOURCE. “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts.” The reference is here to the creation (Genesis i. 3). It reminds us, First, Of *antecedent darkness*. The state of the soul before this light enters it, is analogous to the state of the earth before God kindled the lights of the firmament. It was cold, chaotic, dead. In what a sad condition is the unregenerate soul! It reminds us, Secondly, Of *almighty sovereignty*. “Let there be light,” let light be, and light was. The luminaries of the firmament were kindled by the free, uncontrolled, almighty power of God. So it is with real spiritual light. It comes because God wills it. Everywhere He “worketh according to the counsel of His own will.” The words suggest concerning this light that: II. It REVEALS THE GRANDEST SUBJECT. Light is a revealer. All the hues and forms, beauties and sublimities of the earth would be hid from us without the light. What does this soul light reveal? “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God.” Gospel light entering the soul makes God visible as the eternal reality and the fountain of being, and the source of all blessedness. Where this Gospel light is not the soul either ignores or denies Him; or, at most, speculates about Him, and at best has now and then flitting visions. But under the radiance of the Gospel, God is the *Reality* of all realities, the *Fountain* of all existences, the *Root* of all the sciences. In this

light they see God, and through Him they see and interpret His universe. The words suggest concerning this light that: **III. It STREAMS THROUGH THE SUBLIMEST MEDIUM.** "In the face of Jesus Christ." There is undoubted allusion here to what is said of Moses (chap. iii. 13.) when the divine glory was reflected on his face, and produced such a splendour and magnificence that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look upon it. The sense here is that in the face or the person of Jesus Christ the glory of God shone clearly, and the divinity appeared without a veil. This light coming through Christ, who is the image of the invisible God, is **First: True light.** He is the truth. It is, **Secondly: Softened light.** The soul could not stand the light coming directly from the infinite source, it is too dazzling. Through the medium of Christ it comes so softened as to suit our weakness. It is, **Thirdly: Quickening light.** It falls on the soul like the sunbeam on the seed quickening into life.

No. CCCXXXV.

### The Loving Heart the Faculty for Knowing God.

"HE THAT LOVETH NOT, KNOWETH NOT GOD."—1 John iv. 8.

**I. The loving heart, not the INQUIRING INTELLECT.** The intellect has tried to find out God, tried for ages, towered to the heavens, penetrated the depths of the earth, and, after all its investigations, has pronounced Him to be the Unknowable. "The world by wisdom knew not God." **II. The loving heart, not the CREATIVE IMAGINATION.** Imagination has swept the universe, and yet failed to discover God. It has filled the world with myths, superstitions, and idols, but it has not found God. **III. The loving heart, not the EXCITED CONSCIENCE.** The excited conscience has formulated a God, but it has been a God of vengeance, wrath, and fury. The fact is "God is love," and love alone can discover love. Intellectually, God "passeth knowledge." Sympathetically, He is brought close to our hearts. God is eternal mystery to the loftiest intellect, God is a hideous monster to a guilty conscience. God is only known to the loving. If I know the controlling feelings of a being, I know him, though I may be ignorant of his person and his history; and if I know the feelings of God, I know Him; if I have love, I know Him, though His nature is the mystery in which all thoughts are lost. Profoundly philosophical, therefore, is the statement that "He that loveth not, knoweth not God."\*

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\* See "Homilist," Vol. xvii., p. 22.



No. CCCXXXVI.

**Experiences of Piety.**

"THEY DRAW NIGH THAT FOLLOW AFTER MISCHIEF, THEY ARE FAR FROM THY LAW," &c.—*Psalm cxix.* 150-152.

These words may be regarded as expressing the experience of a pious man in relation to wicked men and in relation to the great God. I. In relation to WICKED MEN. They are here represented as : First : The *assailants of piety*. "They draw nigh" to the pious man. What for ? Not to serve him, but to injure him. Draw nigh with hostile spirit and intent. They are represented as, Secondly : The *pursuers of evil*. "Follow after mischief." Mischief is their mission. They are "wrong doers." They are represented as, Thirdly : The *forsakers of law*. "They are far from thy law." Far both in spirit and in conduct. We have the experience of piety : II. In relation to the GREAT GOD. First : The *proximity of His presence*. "Thou art near, O Lord." Near to protect, guide, and bless. Secondly : The *supreme excellency of His testimonies*. (1) They are faithful. "All thy commandments are truth. Concerning thy testimonies I have known of old." They are realities, "God is faithful that has promised." (2) They are eternal. "Thou hast founded them for ever." They are not temporary provisions, not imperfect measures, but they are eternal, old as God, never to be superseded. "The word of our God shall stand for ever."

No. CCCXXXVII.

**Easter Sermon.\***

"HE IS NOT HERE."—*Matt.* xxviii. 6.

Angels ministered unto Jesus after His temptation in the wilderness, in His agony in the garden, and now at His resurrection. The testimony of angels as to the presence of Christ. I. NEGATIVELY. "He is not here." (1) He is not among the dead in the grave. (2) He is not among the dead things of earth. (3) He is not among the pleasures and vanities of earth. (4) He is not in the heart of the sinner, &c. II. AFFIRMATIVELY. Christ is in certain places and assemblies. (1) He is with His disciples everywhere, blessing and administering peace to them. (2) He is *in* His house and ordinances.


J. ab. G.

\* The substance of a sermon preached in Welsh in a small church in the midst of the mountains of Wales.

# *The Preacher's Scrap Book.*

## HEROES OF THE RACE.

### No. II.—HEROES OF PHILANTHROPY.—HOWARD.

HE benevolent spirit of John Howard was first directed to the reform of prisons by a personal adventure of a seemingly accidental nature. He was on a voyage to Portugal at a time when Lisbon was an object of painful interest—still smoking in ruins from the effects of the memorable earthquake. He had not proceeded far on his voyage when the packet in which he had embarked was captured by a French privateer. He was treated with great cruelty. He was allowed no food or water for forty-eight hours; and, after landing at Brest, he was imprisoned in the castle with the rest of the captives. They were cast into a filthy dungeon, and were kept for a considerable time longer without food. At length a joint of mutton was flung into the den, which the unhappy men were forced to tear in pieces, and gnaw like wild beasts. The prisoners experienced the same cruel treatment for a week, and were compelled to lie on the floor of the horrible dungeon, with nothing but straw to shelter them from the noxious and pestilential damps of the place. Howard was at last set at liberty, and returned to England; but he gave himself no rest until he had succeeded in liberating many of his fellow prisoners. He then opened a correspondence with English prisoners in other gaols and fortresses on the Continent; and found that sufferings as bad, or even greater, than his own, were the common lot of the captives. Shortly after, his attention was called to the state of English prisons in the course of his duties as High Sheriff of the county of Bedford. This office is usually an honorary one, leading merely to a little pomp and vain show. But with Howard it was different. To be appointed to an office was with him to incur the obligation to fulfil its duties. He sat in court and listened attentively to the proceedings. When the trials were over, he visited the prison in which the criminals were confined. There he became acquainted with the shameful and brutal treatment of malefactors. The sight that met his eyes in prison revealed to him the nature of his future life-mission. The prisons of England, as well as of other countries, were then in a frightful state. The prisoners

were neither separated nor classified. The comparatively innocent and the abominably guilty were herded together ; so that common gaols became the hotbeds of crime. The hungry man who stole a loaf of bread found himself in contact with the burglar or the murderer. The debtor and the forger, the petty thief, and the cut-throat, the dishonest girl and the prostitute, were all mixed up together. Swearing, cursing, and blaspheming pervaded the gaol. Religious worship was unknown. The place was made over to Beelzebub. The devil was king. Howard thus simply tells his impressions as to the treatment of prisoners :—"Some who by the verdict of juries were declared not guilty—some on whom the grand jury did not find such an appearance of guilt as subjected them to a trial—and some whose prosecutors did not appear against them—after having been confined for months, were dragged back to gaol, and locked up again until they should pay sundry fees to the gaoler, the clerk of assize, and such like." He also remarked that the "hard-hearted creditors," who sometimes threatened their debtors that they should *rot in gaol*, had indeed a very truthful significance ; for that in gaol men really did rot—literally sinking and festering from filth and malaria. Howard estimated that, numerous as were the lives sacrificed on the gallows, quite as many fell victims to cold and damp, disease and hunger. The gaolers' salaries were not paid by the public, but by the discharged innocents. Howard pleaded with the Justices of the Peace, that a salary should be paid to the gaoler. He was asked for a precedent. He said he should find one. He mounted his horse, and rode throughout the country for the precedent. He visited county gaols far and near. He did not find a precedent for the payment of a salary to the gaolers, but he found an amount of wretchedness and misery prevailing amongst the prisoners, which determined him to devote himself to the reformation of the gaols of England and of the world. At Gloucester he found the castle in the most horrible condition. The castle had become the gaol. It had a common court for all the prisoners, male and female. The debtor's ward had no windows. The night room for men felons was close and dark. A fever had prevailed in the gaol, which carried off many of the prisoners. The keeper had no salary. The debtors had no allowance of food. In the episcopal city of Ely, the accommodation was no better. To prevent the prisoners' escape they were chained on their backs to the floor. Several bars of iron were placed over

them, and an iron collar covered with spikes was fastened round their necks. At Norwich the cells were built underground, and the prisoners were given an allowance of straw, which cost a guinea a year. The gaoler not only had received no salary, but he paid £40 a year to the under Sheriff for his situation ! He made his income by extortion. Howard went on from place to place, inspired by his noble mission. The idea of ameliorating the condition of prisoners engrossed his whole thoughts, and possessed him like a passion. No toil, no danger, nor bodily suffering could turn him from the great object of his life. He went from one end of England to the other, in order to drag forth to the light the disgusting mysteries of the British prison-houses. In many cases he gave freedom to such as were confined for some petty debt, and to many others who were utterly guiltless of crime.

Upon the conclusion of his survey, the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee, in order to ascertain the actual state of the case. He appeared before it, laden with his notes. In the course of the inquiry, a member, surprised at the extent and minuteness of his information, inquired at whose expense he had travelled. Howard was almost choked before he could reply. The thanks of the Legislature were given him at the close of his evidence. They followed in the track which he had pointed out. Bills were passed in 1774—the year after he had begun his work—abolishing all fees, providing salaries for the gaolers, and ordering all prisoners to be discharged immediately upon acquittal. It was also directed that all gaols should be cleansed, whitewashed, and ventilated ; that infirmaries should be erected for the healing and maintenance of prisoners, and that proper gaols should be built. Howard was confined to his bed while the bills passed ; but so soon as he had recovered from the illness and fatigue to which his self-imposed labours had subjected him, he rose again, and revisited the gaols, for the purpose of ascertaining that the Acts were duly carried out. Having exhausted England, Howard proceeded into Scotland and Ireland, and inspected the gaols in those countries. He found them equally horrible, and published the results of his inquiries with equal success. Then he proceeded to the Continent to inquire into the prison accommodation there. At Paris the gates of the Bastille were closed against him ; but as respects the other French prisons, though they were bad enough, they were far superior to those of England. When it was ascertained that Howard was making



inquiries about the Bastille, an order was issued for his imprisonment, but he escaped in time. He revenged himself by publishing an account of the State prison, translated from a work recently published, which he obtained after great difficulty and trouble. Howard travelled onward to Belgium, Holland and Germany. He made notes everywhere, and obtained a large amount of information—the results of enormous labour. After returning to England, to see that the work of prison reform had taken root, he proceeded to Switzerland, on the same errand of love. He there found the science of prison discipline revealed. The prisoners were made to work, not only for their own benefit, but to diminish the taxes levied for the maintenance of prisons. After three years of indefatigable work, during which he travelled more than thirteen thousand miles, Howard published his great work on “The State of Prisons.” It was received with great sensation. He was again examined by the House of Commons as to the further measures for the reformation of prisoners. He recommended houses for correction. He had observed one at Amsterdam, which he thought might be taken as a model. He again proceeded thither to ascertain its method of working. From Holland he went to Prussia, crossed Silesia through the opposing ranks of the armies of Austria and Prussia. He spent some time at Vienna, and proceeded to Italy. At Rome he applied for admission to the dungeons of the Inquisition. But, as at the Bastille in France, the gates of the Inquisition were closed against him. All others were opened. He returned home through France, having travelled four thousand six hundred miles through this tour. Wherever he went, he was received with joy. The blessings of the imprisoned followed him. He distributed charity with an open hand. But he did more. He opened the eyes of the thoughtful and the charitable of all countries to the importance of prison reform. He never rested. He again visited the prisons in Great Britain, travelling nearly seven thousand miles. He found that his previous efforts had done some good. The flagrant abuses which he had before observed had been removed; and the gaols were cleaner, healthier, and more orderly. He made another foreign tour to amplify his knowledge. He had visited the gaols of the southern countries of Europe. He now resolved to visit those of Russia. He entered Petersburg alone and on foot. The police discovered him, and he was invited to visit the Empress Catherine at Court. He respectfully informed her Majesty that



he had come to Russia to visit the dungeons of the captives and the abodes of the wretched, not the palaces and courts of kings and queens. Armed with power, he went to see the infliction of the knout. A man and woman were brought out. The man received sixty strokes, and the woman twenty-five. "I saw the woman," says Howard, "in a very weak condition some days after, but could not find the man any more." Determined to ascertain what had become of him, Howard visited the executioner. "Can you," he said, "inflict the knout so as to occasion death in a very short time?" "Yes!" "In how short a time?" "In a day or two." "Have you ever so inflicted it?" "I have!" "Have you lately?" "Yes! the last man who was punished by my hand with the knout died of the punishment." "In what manner do you thus render it mortal?" "By one or two strokes on the sides, which carry off large pieces of flesh." "Do you receive orders thus to inflict the punishment?" "I do." Thus the boast of Russia—that capital punishments had been abolished throughout the empire—was effectually exposed. He wrote from Moscow, that "No less than seventy thousand recruits for the army and navy have died in the Russian hospitals during a single year." Now, Howard was an accurate man, incapable of saying anything but the truth; and, therefore, this horrible fact cannot but heighten our detestation both of war and of despotism. From Russia he travelled home by way of Poland, Prussia, Hanover, and the Austrian Netherlands. In 1783, he travelled for the same purpose through Spain and Portugal. He published the results of his travels in a second appendix to his great work. Twelve years had now passed since Howard had given himself up to the absorbing pursuit of his life. He had travelled upwards of forty-two thousand miles in visiting the gaols of the chief towns and cities of Europe; and he had expended upwards of £30,000 in relieving the prisoners, the sick, and the friendless. He had not, however, finished his work. He determined to visit the countries where the plague prevailed, in order, if possible, to discover a remedy for this frightful disease. His object was to go, in the first place, to Marseilles, through France. In November, 1785, he set out for Paris. The French, remembering his pamphlet on the Bastille, prohibited him from appearing on the soil of France. He disguised himself and entered Paris. During the same night in which he arrived he was aroused from his bed by the police. A lucky thought enabled him to dispose of them for a few minutes, during which

he rose, dressed himself, escaped from the house, and was forthwith on his way to Marseilles. He there obtained admission to the Lazaretto, and obtained the information which he required. He sailed for Smyrna, where the plague was raging. From thence, the resolute philanthropist sailed to the Adriatic by an infected vessel in order that he might be subjected to the strictest quarantine. He took the fever and lay in quarantine for forty days—suffering fearfully—without help, alone in his misery. At length he recovered, and made his way home to England. He visited his country estate, provided for the poor of the neighbourhood, and parted from his humble friends as a father from his children. He had one more journey to make. It was his last. His intention was to extend his inquiries on the subject of the plague. In 1789 he proceeded through Holland, Germany and Russia, intending to go to Turkey, Egypt, and the States of Barbary. But he was only able to travel as far as Kherson, in Russian Tartary. There, as usual, he visited the prisoners, and caught the gaol fever. Alone, amidst strangers, he sickened and died, in his 64th year. To one who was by his bedside he marked a spot in a churchyard in Dawphiny where he wished to be buried. “Lay me quietly in the earth, place a sundial over my grave, and let me be forgotten.” But the noble Howard will not be forgotten so long as the memory of man lasts. He was the benefactor of the most miserable of men. He thought nothing of himself, but only of those who without him would have been friendless and unhelped. In his own time he achieved a remarkable degree of success. But his influence did not die with him, for it has continued to influence not only the legislation of England, but of all civilised nations down to the present time. Burke thus described him: “He visited all Europe to dive into the depths of dungeons; to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain; to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression and contempt; to remember the forgotten; to attend the neglected; to visit the forsaken, to compare and collect the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original, and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It is a voyage of discovery, a circumnavigation of charity; and already the benefit of his labour is felt more or less in every country.”—(See *Dr. Smiles on “Duty.”*)

## *Ministers Whom I Have Known.*

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*(Continued from page 210.)*

The late *Dr. Robert Vaughan*, projector and editor of the "British Quarterly," I also knew; I met him not unfrequently at the Milton Club, often heard him speak, and once or twice heard him preach. He was of average stature and bulk, with a head not indicating any great intellectual superiority, and a countenance not very prepossessing. In truth, there seemed to be a superciliousness in his looks and an imperiousness in his bearing. He was not the most learned of men, or the greatest of thinkers, he professed to be a great historian, and aspired to oratoric distinction. His speeches were evidently composed with great care, committed to memory and delivered with studied tones and action, but there seemed to be a sad lack of naturalness and glow both in the man and his productions. Hence, though he would often evoke the loud cheer of those whose opinions he echoed, he could never rouse the enthusiasm of his audience. During the last years of his existence, however, he became very popular with his denomination, and won at last the transcendent (?) honour of becoming the chairman of the Congregational Union. For many years he stood aloof from that organisation and spoke strong words against it, but having once reached the sublime position of chairman he became its advocate and hero. In this his conduct agreed with that of some other ministers whom I have known, whose vanity overcame all their previous objections, and falsified their previous professions. Verily there seems something talismanic in this chairmanship; whilst the little men covet it and struggle for it, strong men when forced into it become admirers of an institution for which before they had little sympathy, if not much dislike. He was the author of several literary productions, but few, if any, perhaps possess that kind of vitality necessary to bear them into wide circles, or secure for them a permanent existence. Notwithstanding all this I regard him as a man of considerable ability, honest convictions, and genuine piety, who rendered service to the higher interests of mankind.

*The Rev. John Hunt*, who was for many years minister of the

Independent Church, Streatham, not more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Stockwell (my old sphere of labour), I knew intimately. He was an old man when I became acquainted with him, with hair as white as snow. He had a handsome face, fine eyes, well formed features, and a ruddy countenance as fresh as the morning. He was the editor of one of the editions of the celebrated John Howe's works, and in that capacity he acted in a way that reflected great credit upon his intellect and heart. Before I entered on my ministerial work at Stockwell—after having received the unanimous invitation of the Church there—I received from him a very warm invitation to dine with him. I availed myself of his hospitality. On this occasion he took the opportunity, which he considered his duty, of giving me information as to how matters stood in the sphere on which I was about to enter. Such was his disheartening account that if I could have withdrawn with honour from my engagement I would have done so. He told me “that the position of the chapel was such that it would be madness to expect the gathering of a large congregation, that the congregation had dwindled to about 50 attendants, that during the previous twelve months the church had tried many very able ministers, that at the church meetings where they had to decide who to invite, there were quarrellings and almost fightings, and that he who had acted as chairman at one of their meetings had recommended them to close their chapel and to join the church of Rev. S. Eldridge, at Trinity Church, close at hand.” Having thanked him for his information, which was very discouraging—and which I found, alas! to be true—I told him that I felt bound to try. This I did, and do not regret. Although I began with a miserable congregation in an old barn-like building, with no guaranteed income, I succeeded, under God, in putting up a fine chapel, capable of holding 1,000 people, and drawing and keeping for years a large and respectable congregation, raising large funds for various religious institutions, and contributing no less than £200 a year to the Missionary Society. In a few years no man was more hearty in his congratulations than Rev. John Hunt, although we often came into collision, for he was a man of a somewhat peppery temperament, and at times treated me as if I were a boy, and that he had a right to lecture me. Once or twice, on public platforms, at meetings in the neighbourhood, he lost his temper with me and refused to shake hands on parting. Still he was a fine old man, and did a good work, and occupies now, I have no doubt, as good a



position in the great world of spirits as most of his ministerial contemporaries who have quitted this scene.

*Rev. Mr. Atkins*, late of Southampton, I knew very well, though not intimately, for he was quitting the stage of ministerial service, not long after I appeared on it. He was in every sense a handsome man. His form was a model for a painter, his countenance was attractive, his head not large, but thickly covered with auburn curls. His tread was that of a lord, his bearing most stately. He had a fine voice, a copious vocabulary, and a fluent utterance. Once I heard him at Exeter Hall speaking to a crowded audience, rolling out his thoughts—which I did not think very profound—in melodious periods. He spoke and attitudinised with waving—as was his wont—his white cambric handkerchief in the air. Once I preached with him at an ordination service at Odium, with the Rev. Spedwen Curwen, late of Reading—of whom I shall have something to say hereafter. I think on every occasion on which I heard Mr. Atkins speak he interlarded his paragraphs with Latin phrases, a habit which somehow or other always suggests to me the meagreness of a man's scholarship, as well as the vanity of his mind. He laboured for many years with great success in a very large chapel at Southampton now occupied by Rev. Mr. Carlisle, LL.B., who is a scholar, an enlightened teacher, and a useful pastor. Dr. Isaac Watts—the famous hymnist—was for many years the pastor of this church. A few months ago I preached at its re-opening services. In the vestry there hang the portraits of Isaac Watts, Mr. Atkins, and other pastors of the place. It is now a large and beautiful building, and although during the whole of the Sunday I preached, it rained heavily and incessantly, from morning till night, I had large congregations. One thing surprised me much, and pleased me not a little. In the “*Congregational Hymn Book*,” there is a scandalously mutilated version of one of my hymns. When Mr. Carlisle gave out the hymn following the evening sermon, I found it was my hymn which he had had printed on slips for the occasion in the original version as given in the “*Biblical Liturgy*.” I took this as a mild protest on his part against the principle of mutilating hymns, and also as a testimony of respect for myself.

*(To be continued).*



# *The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.*

## SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

### Plants in their Right Habitat—Men best in their Right Positions.

"It has been well shown that many plants are found alone on a certain soil or sub-soil in a wild state, not because such soil is favourable to them, but because they alone are capable of existing on it, and because all dangerous rivals are by its inhospitality removed. Now, if we withdraw the plant from this position, which it hardly endures, and supply it with the earth, and maintain about it the temperature that it delights in, withdrawing from it at the same time all rivals, which in such conditions Nature would have thrust upon it, we shall indeed obtain a magnificently developed example of the plant, colossal in size, and splendid in organisation; but we shall utterly lose in it that moral ideal which is dependent on its right fulfilment of its appointed functions. It was intended and created by the Deity for the covering of those lonely spots

where no other plant could live. It has been thereto endowed with courage and strength, and capabilities of endurance; its character and glory are not therefore in the gluttonous and idle feeding of its own over luxuriance, at the expense of other creatures utterly destroyed and rooted out for its good alone; but in its right doing of its hard duty, and forward climbing into those spots of forlorn hope where it alone can bear witness to the kindness and presence of the Spirit that cutteth out rivers among the rocks, as He covers the valleys with corn; and there in its vanward place, and only there, where nothing is withdrawn for it, nor hurt by it, and where nothing can take part of its honour, nor usurp its throne, are its strength, and fairness, and price, and goodness in the sight of God to be truly esteemed." RUSKIN.

### The Tree, the Monument of the Leaf—The Life, the Monument of Man.

"IF ever in autumn a pensive-ness falls upon us as the leaves drift by in their fading, may we not wisely look up in hope to their mighty monuments? Behold how fair, how far prolonged in arch and aisle, the avenues of the valleys, the fringes of the hills! So stately—so eternal; the joy of man, the comfort of all living creatures, the glory of the earth,—

they are but the monuments of those poor leaves that flit faintly past us to die. Let them not pass without our understanding their last counsel and example; that we also, careless of monument by the grave, may build it in the world—monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived." RUSKIN.

### The Vessel at Easy Anchor—A Type of Conviction with Liberality.

"THE freedom with which the vessel swings at anchor ascertains the soundness of her anchorage. To be conscious of the force of prejudices in ourselves and others, to feel the strength of the argument we resist, to know how to change places internally with our antagonists, to understand why it is that we provoke their

scorn, disgust, or ridicule—and still to be unshaken, still to adhere with fidelity to the standard we have chosen—this is a triumph to be won by those alone on whom is bestowed not merely the faith which overcomes the world, but the pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above."

SIR JAMES STEPHEN.

### The Food of the Earth, and the Flash of the Heavens; or, The Practical Better than the Speculative.

"IT is more healthful and nutritive to dig the earth, and to eat of her fruits, than to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens, and live upon the beams of the sun: so unsatisfying a thing is rapture

and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

## *Literary Notices.*

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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A SYSTEM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. By DR. J. A. DORNER, Translated by REV. ALFRED CAVE, B.A., and REV. J. S. BANKS. Vol. I. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.

The author of this volume is well known in this country by his magnificent works entitled, "The Person of Christ," and "The History of Protestant Theology." Those acquainted with these productions will expect to find in any future emanations from his pen a thoroughness of scholarship, a clearness and breadth of thought, and a spirit catholic and yet devout. The able translator truly says, "Dorner writes with a keen appreciation of history. He writes as the conscious successor of a long line of thinkers upon some of the gravest questions which can agitate the mind. Not only is his thought moulded by the recent course of Philosophy and Theology, but even words and phrases, sometimes with a meaning slightly altered, may be traced to the influence of such men as Fichte, Schelling, and even Schopenhauer, to say nothing of Kant, who has remodelled the whole scientific terminology of Germany. Theology, in our author's esteem, is assuredly no antiquarian study. What the preacher is to the populace, the theologian is, he evidently thinks, to the preacher—a man who addresses himself to present needs, and who is so eminently affected by the struggles of his own time, that he only investigates the doctrines of the past in the hope of shaping the views of the present."

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FAR OUT: ROVINGS RETOLD. By LIEUT.-COL. W. F. BUTLER, C. B. London: W. Isbister, Paternoster Row.

We know of no modern work of travels approaching this in many excellencies. The scenes described are amongst the wildest, grandest, and most varied on this earth of ours, and the descriptions

are by the hand of a master. There is no wordiness, no attempt at fine writing, no pen painting; but in sentences short, strong and shining, the objects are brought in life-like forms close to the eye. The adventures here, too, are more interesting than romance. But we confess what charms us most of all is the honest exposure of the bloody greed and heartless tyranny of the white man in every part of the world, and his manly denunciation of the wars which they are ever creating. "Wherever," he says, "I have gone amongst wild, or semi-wild men, I have found one idea prevalent in the minds of white men trading with natives. That idea was, that it was perfectly fair and legitimate to cheat the wild man in every possible way. One hundred years ago it was considered right to cheat the black man out of his liberty, and to sell him as a slave; to-day it is the natural habit of thought to cheat the black man out of his land, or out of his cattle. I have no hesitation in saying that five-sixths of our African wars, and a still larger proportion of the Indian wars in America, have their beginnings in wrongs done in the first instance by white men upon natives." "There is nothing more easy," said a veteran Cape statesman to the writer, "than to get up a war in South Africa. If I had only known that the government wanted such things I could have given them a score of Kaffir wars in my time." There is only needed a Governor, hungry for the addition of letters to his name, to let loose the tide, and begin a little war, which costs Great Britain four or five hundred pounds for every negro shot." We have had such a governor who has just returned home from an enterprise, and who is being lionised by a class. It is refreshing in these days to meet with a man like the author who has the manliness to raise his voice against wrong. We want such men in the House of Commons, to stand side by side with Labouchere, Lawson, Cowen, and others of the same noble type, to resist the tyranny of those who, in the name of Liberals, professing faith in justice and moral power, are crushing the representatives of that country, which for ages has been groaning under the heel of English Oppression. (See "Times," Feb. 4th, 1881).

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GEMS OF GREAT AUTHORS; Selected by JOHN TILLOTSON. Gall & Inglis. London: Paternoster Row.

The most valuable thing on this earth is strong, honest, suggestive thought. In some of the Teutonic languages "*Think*" and "*Thing*"

are identical expressions, and verily true thoughts are the greatest things. They are living, multiplying, working powers in the world. This is a book containing thoughts, not the thoughts of one man, but of many scores, not a few of them men of the highest culture and genius.

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MEMORIALS OF ROBERT SMITH CANDLISH, D.D. By W. WILSON, D.D. With Concluding Chapter by ROBERT RAINY, D.D. Edinburgh : Adam & Charles Black.

It is meet that such a man as Dr. Candlish should have his character portrayed and his deeds recorded, for to allow such a life as his to sink into forgetfulness would be an injustice to posterity. Though many of his theological views seem to us out of harmony both with sound moral philosophy and the teachings of Christ, and though we cannot laud his polemical proclivities and temper, yet we have high admiration for his great intellectual power, and his enthusiastic devotion to the interest of mankind, and to the cause of what he believed to be the truth. No one can look at his splendid brow and earnest countenance, which photography has given us in the frontispiece, without feeling that he was one in a thousand, a cedar in the forest of thinkers and preachers. This volume will be read with interest and with profit by thousands.

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HEROES OF THE CROSS. By W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS. London J. Masters & Co.

"The title of this volume," says the author, "indicates its character; it is a record of the lives of certain men and women who have fought the good fight with zeal and constancy; true Heroes of the Cross, never swerving in their loyalty to the standard they embraced. Enthusiasts these, whom the world laughs at or ignores, but whose self-denying labours have largely added to the sum of human happiness. Victors, whose successes are not always apparent to, or understood by, the critical historian or the so-called philosopher, but who have won "the crown" in right of their ardour and their courage, their humility, and their long-suffering." The following are the heroes here sketched: S. Columba, Apostle of Caledonia—S. Bernard, of Clairvaux, the Man of God—Francis, of Assisi, Founder of the Franciscans—S. Catherine, of Sierra, "La Beata Popolana"—Girolama Savonarola, the Reformer of Florence



—S. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies—and Annie Askew, an English Martyr, &c. Mr. Adams, in all his works which we have perused, not only writes with a mind fully informed on the subject in hand, but with a high intent, and with a graceful but vigorous pen. The book is brimful of striking human incidents and elevating thoughts. Almost on every page you open you will find something to arrest attention and start reflection. We heartily recommend this very interesting book.

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SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS ON RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS. By HENRY SOUTHGATE. London: Charles Griffin & Co.

This is another of Mr. Southgate's most valuable volumes, consisting of extracts on every variety of useful subjects, from numerous authors. Some of the authors are ancient, some modern, some very distinguished—most above the average, and they are from every section of the Catholic church. The mission which the author is so successfully prosecuting in literature, is not only a highly beneficent one, but one that is necessary, if existing men are to have any acquaintance at all with the great authors, not only of the past, but of the present also; for in this age, when the duties of life press so heavily on almost every mind, there is no time to pause. If men are to make any acquaintance at all with the great minds of the world, they can only do so with the means which our author supplies.

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THE CHART AND COMPASS. (Sailor's Magazine.) Editor, EDWARD W. MATTHEWS. London: Sailor's Institute, Shadwell.

We are glad to find that this serial not only exists, but grows in power and efficiency. It is in all ways admirably adapted for the interesting class for whom it is designed. Amongst the best things in the volume are those from the pen of the able editor. Amongst the sermons here reported his are the most satisfactory, both to the intellect and for the purpose they are intended.

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WAS MAN CREATED? By HENRY A. MOTT, JR., E.M., Ph.D., &c. New York: Griswald & Co., 150, Nassau Street.

“The object of science is not to find out what we dislike—the object of science is truth. In the discussion of the subject, ‘Was Man Created?’ our object will be, not to study the many ways God might have created him, but the way He actually did create him, for all ways would be alike easy to an Omnipotent Being.” The

author elsewhere informs us that this work is not intended for that class of people who are so absolutely certain of the truth of their religion, and of the immortality that it teaches, that they have become unqualified to entertain, or even perceive, any scientific objection; for such people may be likened unto those who, "*Seeing they see, but will not perceive, and hearing they hear, but will not understand.*" The book is a scientific account of the origin of man. Though the author holds the theory of evolutionism, he is not an infidel, either in relation to the existence of God, or to the divine origin of man. The following statement will show this: "The advancement of science, instead of depriving man of his God, only deprives men of their earlier and ruder conceptions of Deity, only to impart a larger and grander thought of Him. It is true in the educational process some few minds have lost sight of Him altogether, but these are the exceptional, and therefore notable, instances; with the great body of men, the conception of God has steadily enlarged with the progress of science. If science can demonstrate that evolution is true, then it is God's truth, and as such it is man's religious duty to accept it, if he rejects it, superstitiously or unreasonably, he not only defrauds himself, but insults the Author of truth." Without endorsing all the author's views we most heartily recommend this work as worth the study of every preacher. It is highly scientific, and withal devout.

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THE PROPHET JONAH. By REV. SAMUEL CLIFT BURN. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

The book of Jonah is the strange record of a strange man, most difficult to interpret, therefore it has not had many expositors. Perhaps the most able, certainly the most erudite, is that of Dr. Pusey. Dr. Raleigh's we have recently read; that, of course, like the lamented author's other works, is chaste and elegant in style, but not profound or intellectually satisfying. On the whole, we consider the volume before us superior to it. The author, of course, has the advantage of the labours of those who have gone before him, and he wisely avails himself of their productions, but in no way slavishly. The author thinks for himself, and thinks deeply and vigorously, and with practical intent. His style is unpretentious, but not without grace. It is the style of a man who feels he has thoughts worth communicating, and who uses the most suitable language for the purpose.




## Leading Homily.

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### MAN'S RIGHTS AND WRONGS.

(Continued from page 227.)

“TO TURN ASIDE THE RIGHT OF A MAN.” *Lamentations*  
iii. 35.

HE expression to “turn aside the right of a man,” implies not only that man has rights, but that those rights can be turned away from him, he may be deprived of them. This leads us to consider the other part of our subject, viz., that—

II. MAN HAS WRONGS. His wrongs are the antitheses—or rather, deprivations and violations of his rights. In my endeavour to develope man's rights I made two general observations: (1) That he has an inalienable right to enjoy that happiness for which he was created; and, (2) That he has an inalienable right to those conditions essential to the discharge of his obligations. Hence any deprivation of those things necessary to his well-being, physical, intellectual, and moral, and those conditions necessary to the discharge of his obligations, whether domestic, civil, or religious, are *wrongs*. These wrongs, alas, have all but a universal rampancy. Under their ponderous pressure do the teeming millions of heathendom, and the millions of Christendom too, groan

in anguish, and often struggle in desperation. How man's wrongs are inflicted, and how they may be removed, are questions into which it is the urgent duty of every lover of the race to prosecute an earnest inquiry.

First: *How man's wrongs are inflicted.* How comes he to be deprived of things essential both to his well-being and to the discharge of his moral obligations? The despoilers of his rights may be divided into two classes, the external and the internal. (1) The *external*. Who and what outside of man deprive him of his rights? I shall specify a few out of the many. There is the *unrighteous government*. The unrighteous element is found to a greater or less extent in every government under heaven, in the autocratic perhaps most of all, but even in our own it shows its head, and plays its ruthless part. I know that it is fashionable to talk about our "glorious constitution." Whilst I am sensible of its excellencies I am not blind to its defects; if I discover faults and denounce them, let no man regard me as an enemy to my country. He who is perpetually ringing out his laudations of things as they are, who can see only the good, and denounces every honest reformer as a demagogue and an anarchist, is no genuine friend to his country, no useful citizen; he is a political sycophant, not a sage; a partisan, not a patriot. The man who tells me I have no fault, who sees in me nothing but what is excellent, and who dins my ears with his adulations, is either a fool or a flatterer, not a friend. The eye of friendship is quick to discern faults, its tongue ready to denounce them, and its hand prompt to correct them. It is so in relation to the country. He who desires that things should remain as they are, strives not to remove the evil, and to make what is good even

better, is no friend to England's "glorious constitution." Who can look at some of the laws of England without denouncing them as unrighteous? Take the laws in relation to *land*. We are told that God gave the earth to the "children of men"; not to any particular class of men, but to all men; it was intended to be as free for the use of every man as air, light, and water. It was the eternal ordinance of heaven that out of the earth man should get, by honest labour, whatever he needs for his physical well-being; beneath its green sod are hidden, as in a chest, the rough elements out of which he is to sustain his bodily life, weave his raiment, build his habitation, and construct his machines. He, therefore, who holds even one acre of land and prevents its cultivation, so far robs man of his inalienable right. Alas, millions of acres of land in this country are so held, held by a few men.\* Hence so much potential food and

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\* The total area of England and Wales, London excepted, is 37,243,859 acres; Scotland 18,946,694 acres; Ireland, 20,150,678 acres. According to an analysis of the Domesday Book, it appears that besides woods, waste lands and commons, there are in Great Britain and Ireland estates of vast dimensions. But on going into details it will be found that among the large landowners of Scotland, 330 persons own two-thirds, 1,700 persons own nine-tenths, 70 persons own one-half, 24 persons own one-fourth, 12 persons own 4,339,722 acres, 4 persons own 1,534,000 acres, and 1 person owns 1,326,000 acres. Among the large landowners in Ireland, 1,942 persons own two-thirds, 741 own one-half, 292 persons own one-third, 14 persons own 50,000 acres each, 12 persons own 1,297,888 acres, 3 persons own 3,000,000 acres, and one person owns 170,119 acres. Among the large landowners of England and Wales, 10,207 persons own two-thirds, 710 persons own one-fourth, 523 persons own one-fifth, 280 persons own one-sixth, 2 persons own 236,781 acres, 1 person owns 186,397 acres, 26 persons own one-half Northumberland, which contains 1,200,000 acres. Two-thirds of the whole of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, are owned by 12,472 persons, which number represents about three average meetings in the Birmingham Town Hall: the owners of one-half of Great Britain and Ireland could be comfortably seated in the side galleries, and the owners of one-twelfth, the whole area would not fill the front bench of the orchestra. According to the highest return of the number of landlords, it is clear that 30 million people own no land at all.



raiment are shut up from the hungry and the naked. A righteous law should provide that every acre of land should be thrown open to cultivation, or such a tax be laid on its proprietor, as would amount to a sufficient sum to abolish pauperism, and open up fields of remunerative industry for every man and woman in our land. I have just been reading a work, written by an M.P., on the question of the Land laws as applied to Ireland, and their monstrous injustice, their ruthless cruelty, their crushing tyranny, fire my blood, and make it gallop through the veins. Instead of wondering at the conduct of the Irish members in Parliament, standing up in red hot earnestness against a tyranny that is a disgrace to the civilised world, I rather wonder how they have held their peace for so long. I blame them not, but rather denounce the men who, in the name of Liberalism, not only oppose them, but insult them and outrage their oppressed countrymen by coercive measures. Take the laws in relation to *labour*. Honest labour is an institution of heaven. To me the honest labourer is the most respectable citizen, and the noblest of men. The idle loungers, the patrons of medicine, the puppets of fashion, the creatures of fiction, the dandies of alabaster hands and ringed fingers, wherein is their dignity? Of what use are they to society? They are drag-chains on the wheels of progress, they produce nothing, and dishonestly live on the productions of other men's labours. Greater reverence have I for no man than for the honest worker, however rough the tools he wields. The spade, the plough, the saw, the trowel—I like these old rough tools. The sword of the warrior, the pen of the lawyer, the brush of the artist, the seal of the sovereign, these are puerilities, compared with those

tools that build our ships, rear our cities, construct our machines, or those old tilling implements that heave up from nature's prolific store-house that upon which beggars and princes live. Now the only real property amongst men is the *produce* of a man's own honest labour.\* And is not that law unrighteous which, to support regal luxuries, splendours, and gorgeous pageantries, government pensions, huge naval and military establishments, despoils the honest worker of much of the produce of his labour? The most industrious men in England to-day are driven almost to desperation by the constant appeals of tax-gatherers, and thousands are forced from our shores every month in quest of bread. Take our laws in relation to *education* and *religion*. Until recently our great national colleges were accessible only to a few, to the exclusion of the millions; and the history of School Boards, which are modern institutions, reveal not a little tyranny. As to religion, the law regards all as schismatics, and even infidels, who do not conform to the national form of religion. Though I am no enemy to the Episcopal Church but admire its literature, and highly honour its enlightened ministry,

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\* "There seems to be but three ways," says Franklin, "for a nation to acquire wealth: the first is by war as the Romans did, in plundering their conquered neighbours, this is robbery; the second by commerce, which is generally cheating; the third by agriculture, the only honest way wherein a man receives a real increase of the seed thrown into the ground in a kind of continual miracle, wrought by the hand of God in his favour, as a reward for his innocent life and his virtuous industry."

"It has been computed by some political arithmetician, that if every man and woman would work for four hours every day on something useful, that labour would produce sufficient to procure all the necessities and comforts of life. Want and misery would be banished out of the world, and the rest of the twenty-four hours might be leisure and pleasure."

"It is labour," says Locke, "which puts the greatest value upon land, without which it would scarcely be worth anything, it is to that we owe the greatest part of all its useful products."

and am profoundly thankful for the good it has done and still is doing, I nevertheless feel that were it absolutely perfect, the law has no right to enforce it on the millions who not only have no faith in it, but who are hostile to it. Religion is a province into which no government should intrude, it is that which alone concerns the individual man and his God. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Amongst the external despoilers of man's rights there is *secular monopoly*. Vast as are the resources of this earth, they are not boundless. It is the purpose of our Maker that all men should have an adequate, if not an equal participation in them. He, therefore, who appropriates to his own personal use an amount which would be sufficient to supply the wants of a number, is a monopolist, and interferes with the rights of the multitude. These monopolists, alas, are numerous in England, and are constantly increasing. They take from the common stock, some £10,000 a year, some £20,000, some £50,000, some even £100,000 a year, and even more, whilst a large number of the population are actually starving, and a larger number still bound to maintain themselves and family on sums varying from £1 to £3 a week. Is not such monopoly a despoiling of human rights?\*

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\* "If you should see a flock of pigeons in a field of corn, and if (instead of each one picking where and what it liked, taking just as much as it wanted and no more) you should see ninety-nine of them gathering all they got in a heap: reserving nothing for themselves but the chaff and the refuse: keeping this heap for one, and that for the weakest, perhaps worst, pigeon of the flock, sitting round and looking on all the winter, whilst this one was devouring, throwing about, and wasting it; and if a pigeon more hardy or hungry than the rest, touched a grain of the hoard, all the others instantly flying upon it, and tearing it to pieces—if you should see this, you would see nothing more than what is every day practised and established among men. Among men you see the ninety and nine toiling and scraping together a heap of superfluities

One thing is certain, that the time will come when the government of the country must set a limit to the incomes of its citizens. Let the maximum be £20,000 (and surely this is generous enough) and what an enormous annual income there would remain to be devoted to the raising of the whole population to physical competency, educational eminence, and moral worth! Another external despoiler of man's rights is *social chicanery*. It has been said that so rife is the ravenous greed and the unscrupulous dishonesty in society, that one can scarcely have a business transaction with any man without the liability of being cheated. Justice between man and man is generally torpid, and often extinct. The spirit of fraud and falsehood fills the air. Lawyers swindle their clients, merchants defraud their customers, doctors impose on their patients, masters oppress their servants, and employes cheat their masters, buildings are scamped, food is adulterated, we receive shoddy for cloth, and cotton for linen, directors swindle their shareholders, and candidates for parliamentary honours bribe the electors. This social chicanery is a mighty institution in this age, and it is ever at work "*to turn aside the right of a man.*"

Such are some of the forces *outside* of man, despoiling him of his rights, and loading him with wrongs. The other class of despoilers of human rights is : (2) The *internal*. There are elements or forces in the human soul that are perhaps greater despoilers of rights than

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for one (and this one, too, oftentimes, the feeblest and worst of the whole set, a child, a woman, a madman, or a fool) getting nothing for themselves all the while, but a little of the coarsest of the provision which their own industry produces looking quietly on while they see the fruits of all the labour spent or spoiled ; and if one of the number take or touch a particle of the hoard, the others joining against him, and hanging him for the theft."—*Archdeacon Paley*.

any that are without: in fact, the external tyrants derive their energy and continuance from them, outward despots would scarcely live were it not for the inward. How shall I name the internal despoilers of man's rights? Their name is legion, yet I may mention one or two. There is *indolence*. Perhaps in most men naturally the desire for rest is stronger than that for action. The reason perhaps for this is that men may have some credit for honest activity. One thing is certain, that this indisposition to effort, this inertia, can only be overcome by resolute purpose and persistent activity, and requires a motive no less strong than *necessity* to induce this, hence those who can live without work sink into ease, and those who are in work look forward to ease as the crown of their existence. So that indolence is a mighty power in human life, it is one of the barons in the castle of the soul.\* Now indolence steals away from man both the energy and disposition to battle against the outward despoilers of human rights. An indolent man is more disposed to submit to a hundred outrages upon public rights than to rouse himself to the abolition of one. Indolence makes men parasites. Like the spaniel, it will submit to the master's whipping if he will only give it bread and a little patting. The lazy hang on others, they will fawn on and flatter tyrants, only let them have a little more "folding of the hands in sleep." Again, there is *servility*. This, indeed, is an offspring of the former. It means the loss of all sense of manly independency. The independency of manhood is gone, the sovereignty of human nature has sunk into serfdom. The servile man has lost all reverence for human nature, his only reverence is for the clothes it wears and the

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\* See Thomson's "Castle of Indolence."



pelf it owns. Instead of confronting the outward tyrant with lightning in his eyes and thunder on his lips, because of his gorgeous costume he falls down before him and crawls at his feet. When I have seen here in London myriads of half-starved men and women in rags and tatters, shout loud hurrahs from their grisly throats, and throw their tattered hats and caps into the air, in honour of foreign despots, under whose sway millions groan from day to day, of warriors who have outraged the rights of humanity, and sent thousands into eternity, and of bloated mayors in their gingerbread chariots, I have often been humbled to the dust, and lost all hope of those reformatations in England which both the justice and necessities of mankind demand. Until the bipeds of England grow into men there is not, I trow, much hope for England's improvement. There is *credulity*. A tendency to believe is an inherent element in human nature, and as such has its beneficent ends. To believe without evidence is *credulity*. This credulity in a child is innocent, because he is incapable of appreciating evidence, and rests on authority. But credulity in a man is a sin and a curse, and how prevalent is this credulity ! In whatever mind it prevails it tends to "turn aside the right of a man." It makes the man cheatable at every turn, and in all his relations ; cheatable in politics, he believes the promises made by the ambitious candidate on the hustings, and he is cheated ; in commerce he believes the statements of the tradesman and the merchant, and he is cheated ; in religion he believes the utterances of the preacher and the priest, and he is cheated. This credulity is also the child of indolence ; not until men rouse themselves to intellectual study so as to become qualified to form an

independent judgment, will they free themselves from those fraudulent forces and impostures that "turn aside the right of a man." There is *intemperance*. Intemperance in either form, eating or drinking, is one of the greatest despoilers of human rights. The man who makes his "belly his god" is a slave. But perhaps the intemperance of drinking is even worse. "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." A "mocker" in sooth it is. It deceives men in many ways. Not only does it deceive the drunkard by beguiling and befooling him, but it deceives others as to its advantage. That it strengthens the system is a deception. Chemistry has shown that it contains no nourishment for the body. That it enriches the national revenue is a deception. It is true that the taxes on alcoholic drinks bring millions annually into the national exchequer, but how much of the wealth of the nation does it exhaust by the pauperism and crime which it creates. Alcoholic drink is the great false prophet in England. A prophet working busily in every district under the inspiration of hell. "Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise," says Solomon. In truth, nothing is more foolish than to indulge in alcoholic drinks. It injures the health, it enfeebles the intellect, it deadens the moral sensibilities, it destroys reputations, it impoverishes the exchequer, it disturbs friendship, it breeds quarrels, it brings misery into the family, it is fraught with innumerable curses. "A drunken man," says Shakespeare, "is like a drowned man, a fool, or madman; one draught above heat makes him a fool, the second mads him, and the third drowns him." For a "pot of heavy wet," to use the language of Carlyle, a man will sell his political vote, his promise, his conscience, his soul.

Such are some out of the many internal despoilers of man's rights. Having seen how man's wrongs are inflicted, let us inquire—

Secondly : *How man's wrongs are to be removed.* How are they to be removed ? *Not by violent declamation against existing authorities.* Demagogism has ever done more harm than good. Violent declamation against men in power is generally unjust, always impolitic. Unjust because generally our legislators have not half the power to do what we expect them to possess. No statesman can make a morally enslaved people free. Impolitic, too, because it inspires the rulers with contempt, and renders them far less disposed to accede to popular claims. Nor yet can you regain your rights by *physical force*. Goaded on by oppression, men have often had recourse to arms in order to achieve their rights, and oceans of blood have been shed for the purpose. But I know of no instance in history—even the war of American Independence included—where violence has promoted the rights of man. Force in its essence is opposed to freedom, it creates and fosters passions, characters, and habits, that are the very soul of tyranny. Cromwell drives a tyrant from the throne of England, and seems for a while to have freed his country, but the noble hero was scarcely cold in his grave, before another tyrant was on the throne, and the old wrongs re-appeared in new forms. The real chains that fetter men are too subtle to be cut by the sword, the tyrants of humanity are too impalpable to be shot by musketry, or burnt by fire. How then ? (1) By the promotion of *Sound Knowledge*. In ignorance, men like Esau will sell their birthright for a morsel of meat. Popular

ignorance is the cradle of tyrannies. Absalom, when he wanted the throne of Israel, cajoled the people, pretending that he loved them, he kissed their hands, and, it is said, he "stole their hearts." Popular ignorance is the hot-bed of all impostures. Give the people sound knowledge as to what their rights really are, as to what true dignity is, and true happiness, let each citizen come to know what he really is in the universe, and he will not sell himself for any amount to any unworthy purpose. He will not give up his liberty in order to shoot or to be shot at for any amount of income, still less for "thirteen pence-halfpenny" a day. By sound knowledge I mean primarily, a knowledge of the ethics of Christ. The ethics of heathen teachers will not do, they foster despotism and encourage a servile subjection to rulers. The ethics of Christ are, that all men are equal in the sight of God, that one man has rights as well as another, that each holds his being and powers in trust from the Almighty, and must render to Him an account at last. Indoctrinate the people with this knowledge, and what then? Why then every man would respect his own individuality, employ his own individual talents, and work out his own individual beliefs, and despots would have to fight their own battles; men would no longer consent to be engines worked by tyrants. They would act as free men in the universe, not as slaves either in the camp, on the field, or in the shop. You who desire, therefore, to raise universal man to his long lost rights must not fail to indoctrinate your race with the ideas of Jesus of Nazareth. True ideas are the great reformers, they are the seed of character, and the soul of history, they

lift the savage to a sage, they turn the sinner into a saint, they create the difference between the wild man of the woods and the student of the heavens. The individual idea sways the individual man, the national idea is the national sovereign. Make the Christly idea the national idea. (2) By the promotion of *Christly morality*. "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." This is the foundation of Christ's morality, and it agrees with the common sense, and common conscience of mankind. Who would have another to delude, cheat, and destroy him? Who would not desire others to minister to his good, to help him on and up the path of a happy life? Let us, then, look to ourselves for the regaining of the lost rights of ourselves and others. No government under heaven can make men who are under the despotism of indolence, servility, credulousness, intemperance, free. Governments are but the offspring of public opinion and character. Like the vegetation of the field, they depend upon the soil beneath. Change that and you will have new flowers, plants, and trees. Give to the people new ethical ideas and character, and corrupt governments will vanish. True reforms will not come as seasons come without our aid, the material globe wheels on independently of us, but the moral globe will stick fast in the mud of corruption, unless we lift it up, and set it agoing. No, no. No parchment charta, no act of Parliament can give us liberty. Of what avail is liberty to the paralytic to walk the green fields or visit distant lands? He cannot move his limbs. The faculties of an immoral community are paralysed. "He is the free man whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves beside."



Do I mean by all this to disparage the honest work of political reformers? to cool their ardour or to retard their efforts? By no means. Any government under whose laws the land and the property of the country are passing more and more into the hands of the few, allow the pauperism of England to increase day by day,\* permit hundreds of men to represent the people in Parliament, who are so intellectually and morally incompetent as to obstruct the progress of just and wise legislation, and who squander away the time of the nation in useless debate; that sanction international meddlings, quarrelings and wars, that permit taxation to become a burden that is almost intolerable; that rob the people of their hardly earned pittance to augment the wealth, the luxury and pageantry of the idle and worthless; that make the millions the slaves of the few, certainly demand a reformation. "*Of all injustices,*" says Sir R. L'Estrange, "*that is the greatest which goes under the name of law, and of all sorts of tyranny the forcing of the letter of the law against the equity is the most insupportable.*" No wonder the question, "Is England ripe for a civil revolution?" is a question becoming supreme in all thoughtful circles, and its affirmative is widening and deepening its influence every day. Down amongst the mighty masses of the population, the cry for a revolution grows louder and louder. Revolution is not an evil in itself. Outward nature lives in revolutions, the progress of the individual man towards the grand

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\* The following are the number of paupers in London (exclusive of lunatics in asylums and vagrants) on the last day of the of the following weeks:—Third week of March, 1881, 94,346; third week of March, 1880, 92,443; third week of March, 1879, 87,745; third week of March, 1878, 84,753.—*The Times*, April 2nd, 1881.

end of his being is a march through constant revolutions, and whatever excellence any government possesses it has won by revolutions. "*It is time,*" says the illustrious Mackintosh, one of the greatest authorities on such subjects, "*that man should learn to tolerate nothing ancient that reason does not respect, and to shrink from no novelty, to which reason may conduct. It is time that the human powers so long occupied by subordinate objects and inferior arts, should mark the commencement of a new era in history, by giving birth to the art of improving government and increasing the civil happiness of man. It is time, as it has been wisely and eloquently said, that legislators, instead of that narrow and dastardly coasting which never ventures to lose sight of usage and precedent should, guided by the polarity of reason, hazard a bolder navigation, and discover in unexplored regions, the treasure of public felicity. Whatever excellence, whatever freedom is discoverable in governments has been infused into them by the shock of a revolution.*" "*There is a time,*" says Burke, "*when men will not suffer bad things because their ancestors have suffered worse. There is a time when the hoary head of inveterate abuse will neither draw reverence nor obtain protection.*" That time seems come. "*It is a duty,*" says Erskine, "*which every man owes to society to point out the defects of a government. When these defects and the means of remedying them are generally seen by a nation, that nation will reform its government or its constitution in the one case, as the government repealed or reformed the law in the other.*" Revolution is in the hand of the people. "*Without the consent of all the governed,*" says Hooker, the great ecclesiastical authority, "*There would be no reason that one man*

*should take upon him to be lord, or judge over another."*  
"The strength of the Government does not consist in anything within itself, but in the attachment of a nation, and the interest which the people feel in supporting it. When this is lost, government is but a child in power, and though, like the old government of France, it may harass individuals for a time, it but facilitates its own fall." Heaven decrees that by revolution the world is to be borne on to moral perfection. "I WILL OVERTURN, OVERTURN, OVERTURN, OVERTURN IT; AND IT SHALL BE NO MORE UNTIL HE COME WHOSE RIGHT IT IS; AND I WILL GIVE IT TO HIM." The world wants the right man to rule it, and he is coming up the "steps of time" on the triumphant chariot of moral and peaceful revolutions.

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FALSEHOOD.—A lie should be trampled on and extinguished, wherever found. I am for fumigating the atmosphere, when I suspect that falsehood, like pestilence, breathes around me.

TRADITION.—"What an enormous Camera-obscura" magnifier is tradition! How a thing grows in the human memory, in the human imagination, when love, worship, and all that lies in the human heart, is there to encourage it. And in the darkness, in the entire ignorance, without date or document, no book, no Arundel marble; only here and there some dull monumental cairn.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

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# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

OUR PURPOSE.—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough HOMILETIC treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

OUR METHOD.—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) THE HISTORY of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) ANNOTATIONS of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) The ARGUMENT of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) The HOMILETICS of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately educed, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLVI.

### The Highest Work of Mankind.

“PRAISE YE THE LORD,” &c. Ps. cxi. 1-10.

HISTORY:—This and the following Psalm are alphabetical. The lines begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The following remarks from the “*Four Friends*” concerning the alphabetical arrangement, deserve quotation here. “In the psalter many psalms present themselves composed on the acrostic or alphabetical ar-

rangement, of which the most elaborate and extended specimens are found in the Lamentations, and in the 119th Psalm. As the name alphabetical implies, each letter of the alphabet in order forms the initial letter of consecutive verses. In some each letter is once employed; in Lamentations (chap. iii.), each letter forms the begin-

ing of three, and in Ps. cxix. of eight consecutive verses. Such an arrangement is by its nature constrained and artificial; adapted for didactic rather than for lyric expression, it belongs to an age no longer animated by the soul of poetry, but struggling to clothe its religious thoughts in a poetic form. No one who has formed any adequate conception of the genius of David could fancy his selecting an arrangement which hides the flow of thought and language, and often necessitates repetition of ideas. Indeed, in the earliest specimen of the alphabetical psalm, assuming that Ps. ix., x., form one poem, we see how uneasily the spirit of the Hebrew poet bore its shackles, and how when the Psalmist's thoughts find full expression, the structure is left incomplete. In short, the system belongs not to the period of national prosperity and vigorous life, but to the time of its decadence and extinction. Religion is no longer connected with national triumphs, no longer enters into the administration of a prosperous kingdom. There has opened a wide gulf between the godly and the world. Reli-

gious meditation had become the stay of the afflicted, their only refuge from unrighteous rules. The alphabetical arrangement was doubtless found an aid to memory, and the psalmist or prophet naturally employed it as a vehicle for lamentations or consolations addressed to others, or for purposes of private devotion to reiterate his confidence in the watchful protection of Jehovah, to dwell on His attributes, and meditate lovingly on every aspect and title of His written law."

Who produced it, and on what occasion, are questions to this day unsolved, and the solution matters not. If doctrines are true and sentiments pure, what matters the organ through which they flow? Truth is not the less real and important because uttered by an uninspired man. The two psalms are mixtures of materials taken from old ones. They are composites.

ANNOTATIONS :—Ver. 1. "*Praise ye the Lord,*" &c. Here is a call and a resolution to praise Jehovah. "*I will praise*"—says the writer, "*with my whole heart.*" "*In the assembly,*" or in the counsel. The reference is, perhaps, to the Sanhedrin, composed of about seventy



members. It means "I will praise Thee openly and publicly."

Ver 2.—"*The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.*" The particular works referred to here are in all probability the works connected with the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt, and their conductment into the Promised land. Still it is true of all His works, creative and sustaining works, all are great. And all are "*sought out,*" or exceedingly excellent to those who search into them.

Ver. 3.—"*His work is honourable and glorious, and His righteousness endureth for ever.*" "Glory and splendour is His work and His righteousness endureth for ever."—*Delitzsch.*

Ver. 4.—"*He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.*" His works are rememberable works in themselves, and by oral and written tradition and commemorative festivals, their memory will be perpetuated for ever.

Ver 5.—"*He hath given meat unto them that fear Him; He will ever be mindful of His covenant.*" The allusion here,

probably is, to the feeding of His people in the wilderness, and the assurance that what He then did He will always do to those that fear Him. It is His purpose, His plan, and His "*covenant*" always to take care of those that trust in Him.

Ver. 6.—"*He hath showed His people the power of His works.*" Or His powerful works in their deliverance from Egypt, preservation in the wilderness and their conquest of the land of promise, and all this in order to "*give them the heritage of the heathen.*"

Ver. 7, 8.—"*The works of His hands are verity and judgment,*" &c. All His works are true, righteous, sure, and lasting.

Ver. 9.—"*He sent redemption unto His people, He hath commanded His covenant for ever,*" &c. "He redeemed His people out of Egyptian bondage, and still redeems; He commanded (*i.e.*, made authoritatively) a covenant on Sinai with them and keeps it for evermore. His name (*i.e.* Himself) is holy and deeply to be feared."—*Canon Cooke.*

Ver. 10.—"*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do His com-*

*mandments, His praise endureth for ever.*" "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of Jahve, a good understanding have all dutiful ones. He shall have eternal praise."—*Delitzsch* (see Prov.

iv. 7). The fear of Jehovah is the choicest wisdom.

ARGUMENT:—The grand purpose of the whole Psalm is to praise Jehovah for the wonderful works He wrought on behalf of the Jews of old.

HOMILETICS:—The Psalm directs us to the highest work of man, the hallelujah work, the work of praising God. This is the work for which all rational moral beings are created, the work in which alone all their faculties can find their most vigorous, harmonious, and happy development. Man becomes great, glorious, and happy just so far as he is lost in this, the sublimest of all services. Observe here:—

I. A NOBLE RESOLUTION for this highest work. The writer not only calls on all to praise the Lord, but he resolves to consecrate himself to the work, "*Praise ye the Lord, I will praise the Lord.*" "Hallelujah, I will thank Jehovah with my whole heart in the company of the upright in the great congregation." His resolution points to two things—thoroughness and publicity.

First: Thoroughness. "*With my whole heart.*" Not with my lips and manners and occasional services, but with my whole soul; I myself will go into it, not some of my faculties, but all. (1) Without this thoroughness it would be unacceptable to God. He requires *us*, not *ours*. "He abhors the sacrifice where not the heart is found." (2) Without this thoroughness it will yield no happiness to ourselves. There is no true enjoyment in any service not rendered with the whole soul. No man is ever happy in any enterprise into which he cannot throw his whole being. (3) Without this thorough-

ness it will not be continuous. It will not run on day by day, week by week, through all the stages of life, and this alone meets the wants of our nature and the claims of God, but it will be broken, desultory, and worthless. The spirit of true praise is thus beautifully described by Dr. Watts:—

“ I’ll praise my Maker with my breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.  
My days of praise shall ne’er be past  
While life and thought and being last  
Or immortality endures.”

His resolution points to, Secondly: Publicity. “ *In the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.*” Indeed, I see not how a man can praise God thoroughly and not praise Him publicly. He has to do with society, he lives in society, and by it, and if he is thorough, worship will come out in every conversation, in every act, in the ring of the voice, in the sublimity of the look, in the dignity of gait. Nor do I see how he could praise Him publicly without praising thoroughly. What a man does not go thoroughly into he often omits. How often do we find those who profess to worship God ashamed to acknowledge Him in public. Such, then, is the resolution here to this noblest of all works. Observe here:—

II. A MIGHTY ARGUMENT for this the highest work. The argument is founded upon the works and character of God.

First: Upon His works. See what is said of His works. “ *The works of the Lord are great.*” (1) They are here spoken of generally. His works, whether of creation, government, or redemption, whether in connection with

matter or mind, are in every sense great, infinitely great in number, variety, and perfection. It is here implied, however, (*a*) that their greatness is only seen by those who search into them, "*sought out.*" Their greatness is not in their bulk, their form, their colour, but in their essence, their plan, their uses, their relations, their bearings, &c. He who with the microscope studiously looks at the smallest animalculæ, sees more greatness in God's work than the millions of thoughtful men who merely gaze at the revolving planets, heaving oceans, and mighty landscapes. It is here implied (*β*) that those only search into them who have pleasure in them. "*Them that have pleasure therein.*" As a rule we only give our attention to those things in which we have a deep and pleasing interest. A man must be interested in the works of God before he will study them. And to be interested in them he must love their Author. Hence piety is the spring of true philosophy. Concerning His workshere, (2) They are spoken of specifically. His works are (*a*) Grand, "*Honourable and glorious.*" Whatever He does in nature is worthy of Himself, who Himself is "Clothed with honour and majesty." (Ps. civ. 1). Whatever the glorious One does is glorious, a reflection of Himself. His works are: (*β*) Wonderful. "*His wonderful works.*" Can the greatest created intellect in the universe comprehend all concerning what appears to be the most insignificant work of God?

"Thy works, O God, are wondrous,  
 So vast and yet so small,  
 Worlds in bright skies beyond us,  
 And atoms on this ball.  
 In all there is a meaning  
 Beyond the reach of sage,  
 Something inside the seeming  
 That mortals cannot gauge."

His works are Memorable. "*To be remembered.*" Whatever makes the most *impression* on us is the most memorable. Has anything, or can anything, impress the human soul like the works of God? What has so much impressed us as the immeasurable heavens, the unresting, unbounded, and ever-bounding sea, the mighty tornados and booming thunders; will the impression these make, and are making, ever be effaced? They must be remembered. Whatever is the most *vital* to us is the most memorable. In the works of God, and by the works of God, we live; with them we are indissolubly connected; we ourselves are links in the endless chain. We cannot forget His works, because we cannot forget ourselves, we are so "fearfully and wonderfully made." Whatever is the most *lasting* is the most memorable. The works of man decay, their majestic cities crumble to dust; their institutions, political and religious, vanish away as thin clouds from the skies and are seen no more, but God's works stand; their forms will always be before our eyes and their sounds on our ears, and their touch on the springs of our being. God's works are memorable, and they are "*to be remembered.*" "His works are ( $\delta$ ) Beneficent. "*He hath given meat unto them that fear Him.*" This is a reference to the supplies of food with which He blessed the Israelites in the wilderness. But He is always giving "*meat.*" "He openeth His liberal hand and satisfieth every living thing." He gives meat not only to the body, but to the intellect and the affections, but to the soul He is good and He doeth good. All His works are streams from the fountain of His exhaustless benevolence. He is the Fountain of Life. His works are ( $\epsilon$ ) Truthful. "*All His works are verity and judg-*



ment." All the works of man, like himself, are more or less untrue, they are shams, at best but miserable imitations, they are not what they seem. Their architecture, their painting, their music, their manufactures, their merchandise, falsehoods. God's works are true, they are "*verity*," they are what they appear to be, therefore unimproved and unimprovable from age to age. The argument for praising God is here founded, Secondly: Upon His character (1) His rectitude is recognised here. "*His righteousness endureth for ever.*" He is righteous, eternally, immutably righteous, righteous not by conforming to some law of right external to Himself, but righteous by the necessity of His own nature, He is the fountain and standard of all righteousness. "Just and right is He." (2) His mercifulness is recognised here. "*The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.*" Mercy has respect to the tried and the tempted, the sad and the suffering, and righteous though He be, He regards such with tender compassion. A corrupt theology has represented mercy and righteousness as two antagonistic elements, battling attributes of the Divine nature, but they are not only in accord, they are one. Righteousness is but the modification of love, love restoring to the right. (3) His faithfulness is recognised here. "*He will ever be mindful of His covenant.*" "*All His commandments are sure.*" Men break their word because sometimes new light has dawned on them, new necessities press on them, new difficulties embarrass them, but not so the Infinite. He is above new light, new necessities, new embarrassments, His word will stand. "Heaven and earth will pass away," &c.

What an argument here for praising the Lord with

all the heart! How sublimely rational this worship! Observe here :—

III. AN ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATION for this the highest work. “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endureth for ever.*” “*The fear of the Lord*” here does not mean any servile emotion, it is love running into profound reverence, it is love shrinking from everything that will be in any way displeasing to its object. It is the fear of a loving child towards its parent, a fear not of receiving chastisement from the parental hand, but of giving pain to the parental heart. This is religion. It is here stated, (1) That this “*fear of the Lord*,” or piety, is the commencement of wisdom. He who has not a reverential love for God has not learnt the first lessons of true wisdom. True philosophy begins in piety. It is here stated, (2) That the “*fear of the Lord*,” or piety, secures a sound understanding. “*A good understanding have all they that do His commandments.*” Or, as Delitzsch has it, “A good understanding have all the dutiful ones.” “*A good understanding*,” is an understanding, or insight into what is good. How does this wisdom, this understanding, reveal itself? By obedience. “*A good understanding have all they that do His commandments.*” A disobedient man is without a good understanding, and without true wisdom, both of which grow out of the “*fear of the Lord.*”

Now this “*fear of the Lord*,” this piety which is the spring of true wisdom, the guarantee of a sound understanding, and the inspirer of obedience, is the grand qualification for praising the Lord—worship. Those who have it will say and feel, “*His praise endureth for ever.*”

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dörner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### No. CXXII.

#### Noteworthy Aspects of Christ and His Disciples.

"HIS DISCIPLES SAID," &c. (John xvi. 29-33).

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 29.—"*His disciples said, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.*" "They are heartily rejoiced at their own understanding: they congratulate themselves that they can gladden their Master by the declaration that they can understand Him. They recognise in thus understanding, a foretaste of the fulfilment of the promise given them in ver. 25, to which they verbally refer. Now they breathe freely, and inhale the fresh air."—*Hengstenberg.*

Ver. 30. "Now." This is emphatic. "*Are we sure that thou knowest all things, and*

*needest not that any man should ask thee.*" They recognised in their acquaintance with His thoughts, and in the new light which He brings them, the divinity of His mission. They seemed to feel as if the day had already dawned when they need ask for nothing, for He knows all things, and would communicate to them all necessary truths.

Ver. 31. "*Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?*" The question does not mean that He doubted their avowal, for He knew the state of their hearts. He knew, however, that the hour of their full illumination had not yet

dawned. "Their present light," to use the language of another, "was as the flash of a meteor, brilliant but passing away." He knew that clouds were still gathering round them, and a storm that must break over their heads.

Ver. 32. "*Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come,*" &c. He refers to the hour of His crucifixion, when they were all so overwhelmed with terror that they forsook Him and fled, and He was left alone. "*And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.*" In a sense He was away from them. Such a soul as His must have felt isolation in the midst of crowds.

Ver. 33. "*These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me*

*ye might have peace.*" Freedom from all anxieties and apprehensions, and a settled faith in the immutable and all-loving Father. "*In the world ye shall have tribulation;*" or, as some read it, "ye have tribulation." Afflictions, and sorrows, and persecutions are always the lot of true disciples. "*But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*" "The last and crowning act of His victory, indeed, was yet to come. But it was all but come, and the result was as certain as if all had been already over—the consciousness of which, no doubt, was the chief source of that wonderful calm with which He went through the whole of this solemn scene in the upper room."—*Dr. Brown.*

HOMILETICS:—In these verses we have certain *noteworthy aspects both of Christ's disciples and of Himself.* Here we have—

I. Christ's DISCIPLES in noteworthy aspects. They appear here, First: As professing satisfaction with the explanations of their Master. "*His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee, by this we believe thou camest forth from God.*" Some say that the language of the disciples here is not that of

sincerity; that they did not really appreciate the meaning of Christ, as their subsequent history shows; that they only professed to do so. If they were really assured in their own minds that Christ knew "*all things*," and did really believe that He came "*forth from God*," all the better for them; but if their avowal was a mere pretension, most daring was their impiety. At the same time, alas, in this they would only be types of the teeming millions in every age, whose religion is but that of empty profession. How many to-day in England profess to understand the teaching of Christ, who are utterly ignorant of His spiritual meaning. They appear here, Secondly; As unconsciously nearing a terrible crisis. "*Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?*" Are you really sincere? Then I tell you, "*Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.*" The truth of your confession will soon be tested; you are soon to pass through a terrible trial. The reference here is of course to the crucifixion, which was just at hand. How did they stand the test? We are told elsewhere (Matt. xxvi. 56) that "all the disciples forsook Him and fled." Panic-struck, they hurried "*every man to his own*" home, and left their Master "*alone.*"

A time comes in the experience of every professor of religion to test the falsehood or reality of his religion, in great afflictions and dying hours. Here we have

II. Christ HIMSELF in noteworthy aspects. First: Forsaken by all. "*Shall leave me alone.*" Alone, when just as a man, His human heart would yearn for the presence of His friends. Perhaps the words of an Old Testament writer will express His experience in this dark hour. "I looked for some to take pity, and there was



none, and for comforters, but I found none." There is a sense in which the highest natures must always feel themselves alone, unapproached by inferior souls. Of Christ this was true in a pre-eminent degree. No one could enter into His thoughts and feelings. Here He is represented as, Secondly: In communion with His Father. "*Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.*" "*With me*" in all my deepest experiences. Philosophy shows that if there be a God He is with all men, leaves none alone. Conscious guilt shows that God is present as a righteous and inexorable Judge, but piety evermore recognises His presence as a Father. "*The Father is with me,*" said Christ. If the Father is with us we have all we need. Here we see Him as, Thirdly: Giving encouragement to His disciples. He does this in three ways, by, First: Warning them of the tribulations they would meet with. "*In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer.*" "*In the world,*" that is, in their outward life. Great and overwhelming were the trials into which the disciples were about to plunge, and the history of the true Church in all ages has been a history of tribulation. Christ here prepares them for it by forewarning them, and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Trials rushing upon them suddenly and unexpectedly would crush them; but here they are led to expect tribulation, and this was an element of encouragement. He encourages them by, Secondly: Promising them peace in Him. "*That in me ye might have peace.*" Peace for the intellect, no sceptical distracting thoughts need trouble you; peace for the heart, all your affections harmonised and centred in Me, peace for the conscience, no more remorseful reminiscences and forebodings. This

peace is to be found in Christ, in Me not in Churches, not in priesthood, not in creeds, but in Me. How peaceful are the planets whose sun is their centre. The mightiest hurricanes of the earth cannot touch them, nor can the most terrible earthquakes shake them in their peaceful orbits. Emblem this of the peace of that man even in the greatest trials of earth whose soul is centred on Christ. He encourages them by, Thirdly : Assuring them of His mastery over the world. "*I have overcome the world.*" Christ often speaks of what is to come as if it had already transpired, so certain was He of the future. The world for a few hours longer would be in fierce antagonism with Him, insulting Him, wounding Him, and murdering Him ; but, sure of the result, He says, "*I have overcome the world.*"

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HOW GOSPEL FACTS HAVE COME DOWN.—Luke indicates three steps (Luke i. 3) of the procedure. First, there were traditions floating in the churches : eye-witnesses of the word handed down to us the things most surely believed ! Then came a digest into order of these traditions : many endeavoured to range with method a consecutive narrative of these traditions. And then this was subjected to careful revision after fresh investigations. I have traced out all things from the very first. Nor is it difficult to discern the object for which our surviving Gospels were put together, and which governed the compiler's choice of material, and the tone and colouring which he gives to it. There are many signs in the Gospel according to Matthew of things reported specially for Jewish readers, while Mark and Luke have an eye rather for Gentile converts. And the purpose of the fourth Gospel is not left to conjecture, but openly avowed, "There are many other things that Jesus did, which are not written in this book" (John xx. 30). This in exact conformity with that which John the apostle announces as the object of his epistle (1 John i. 3). A purpose which Clement of Alexandria has expressed when he says, "John, perceiving the human life of Jesus to have been sufficiently depicted in the previous Gospels, undertook at the desire of his friends and by the instigation of the Holy Ghost to compose a Gospel which should exhibit the Divine Life in Him." This, then, is the one theme of the fourth Gospel—the Divine Life in Jesus, depicted for the furtherance of the Divine Life from Jesus in all His people."—*Prebendary Griffith, M.A.*

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Cæsar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. V.

### A Grand Principle, and a Splendid Example.

"BUT I WOULD YE SHOULD UNDERSTAND, BRETHREN, THAT THE THINGS WHICH HAPPENED UNTO ME HAVE FALLEN OUT RATHER UNTO THE FURTHERANCE OF THE GOSPEL; SO THAT MY BONDS IN CHRIST ARE MANIFEST IN ALL THE PALACE, AND IN ALL OTHER PLACES; AND MANY OF THE BRETHREN IN THE LORD, WAXING CONFIDENT BY MY BONDS, ARE MUCH MORE BOLD TO SPEAK THE WORD WITHOUT FEAR. SOME INDEED PREACH CHRIST EVEN OF ENVY AND STRIFE; AND SOME ALSO OF GOODWILL: THE ONE

PREACH CHRIST OF CONTENTION, NOT SINCERELY, SUPPOSING TO ADD AFFLICTION TO MY BONDS: BUT THE OTHER OF LOVE, KNOWING THAT I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL. WHAT THEN? NOTWITHSTANDING, EVERY WAY, WHETHER IN PRETENCE, OR IN TRUTH, CHRIST IS PREACHED; AND I THEREIN DO REJOICE, YEA, AND WILL REJOICE."—*Phil. i. 12-18.*

In all probability the Philippian Christians as well, perhaps, as most other of the existing

churches that he had planted, would fear that his imprisonment at Rome would prevent the spread of the gospel. Here he assures them of the contrary, and tells them that it had "fallen out rather to the furtherance of the gospel." In these words we discover two very important subjects of thought—

I. A GRAND PRINCIPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD. What is the principle? *The overruling of evil for good.* Nothing would seem a greater evil in the early dawn of Christianity than the imprisonment of St. Paul. There, banished from his own country, bound in bonds, imprisoned by the Praetorium guard, chained day and night to some Roman soldier, utterly unable to go beyond the limited scene of his imprisonment, or to address—as he had often done—vast multitudes. There he was for two long years. During that period it would seem as if the sun of Christianity had gone down to rise no more, leaving the world to go back into Jewish and Gentile darkness, intolerance, and superstition. But here the Apostle says it was not so. It helped, not hindered, the onward march of Gospel truth. He indicates here how it tended in this direction.

First: By *extending its knowledge in the imperial city.* "So that my bonds in Christ (margin "for Christ") are manifest in all the palaces and in all other places." Or, as Dr. Samuel Davidson renders it, "So that my bonds became manifest in all the Praetorium guard and in all the rest." All the Praetorium regiments who, of course, were the most numerous and influential men in the imperial city, the city which conquered the world, would, of course, guard the Apostles by turns, and to each and all who were in special connection with him at the time, he, of course, would not only reveal his own morally noble and soul-commanding character, but earnestly expound that grand system of world-wide philanthropy for which he was in bonds. In this way the Gospel would spread in Rome from soldier to soldier, and from the soldiers to the civilians. Perhaps there could have been no way more effective of spreading the Gospel than this. It tended to the spread of the Gospel—

Secondly: By *encouraging the work of propagation.* "Many of the brethern in the Lord waxing confident by my bonds are much more bold to speak the word without fear." "There is" says Dr. Barry, "a two-

fold sense here, corresponding to the two-fold division of preachers made below. Those who preached Christ "of contention" trusted in St. Paul's captivity as giving them scope, those who preached of "God's will" found in it a striking example of evil overruled, so good, and so gained from it fresh encouragement." The expression "many of the brethren" of course implies not all, and those who did not were Judaising Christians and were affected with enmity towards Paul, and would preach in their own spirit, and in their own way; whilst the others, "the many," would by the noble conduct of Paul as a prisoner, and by the constantly extending circulation of the gospel through the Praetorium regiment take encouragement and catch inspiration. Here, then, is an example of the principle of evil being overruled for good. "A strange chemistry of providence this," says Matthew Henry in his quaint way, "to extract so great a good as the enlargement of the Gospel out of so great an evil as the confinement of the apostle." Three remarks may be offered in relation to this principle. (1) That the known character of God authorises the inference that this would be the principle on which He would pro-

ceed in the moral management of the universe. It is scarcely possible to entertain the belief that a Being of infinite holiness, possessing a wisdom that nothing can baffle, and a power that nothing can resist, would allow evil to run riot for ever in His empire, and make no effort to subordinate it to the advancement of spiritual excellence and happiness. Shall error triumph over truth, wrong over right, the devil over God? Incredible. Antecedently I am bound to conclude that a time will come when the sun of goodness shall scatter from the heavens, every cloud of evil, however wide-spread and dense. Another remark in relation to this principle we offer is: (2) That the Bible supplies abundant statements to support this belief. We read that the little stone—that is goodness—shall not only shatter the colossal image—that is evil—but shall itself grow till it becomes a mountain to fill the whole earth. We read of the knowledge of God covering the earth as the waters cover the channels of the great deep. We read of the "restitution of all things." We read of the "kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ," and of things being put into subjection to Christ, of "all



things working together for good, to them that love God," &c. Another remark in relation to this principle we offer is: (3) That the history of the world is a grand exemplification of this principle. The introduction of sin into the world is a tremendous evil, but how much good has come out of it! What glorious manifestations it has occasioned of God, what moral heroes it has been the means of creating amongst men. The crucifixion of Christ was evil in the most gigantic form: but to what good has the infinitely good One turned it. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." I rejoice to believe in this principle of good overruling evil: it inspires in me the hope that the time will come when every human intellect shall be freed from error, every human conscience from guilt, every human heart from pain, when all the groans of the human creation shall be hushed in eternal silence, and the flames of all hells extinguished for ever. We have here—

II.—A SPLENDID EXAMPLE FOR THE IMITATION OF PREACHERS. "Some, indeed, preach Christ even of envy and strife: and some also of good-

will," &c. Observe, First: The apostle *speaks of two classes in his day*. One preached from a factious, or a *party* spirit. They preached from "envy and strife." This shows beyond question that the Judaising party—the bitter antagonists of Paul—were at work in Rome, preaching in their way the gospel; preaching it not from pure love to Christ and souls, but to gratify their own factious spirit, and to serve their own little sect. A sectarian preaching of the gospel has, alas, ever been common, it is rampant to-day in England—men preaching for sects rather than for souls. The other class of preachers in Rome were those who preached of "*goodwill*" and "*of love*." These had in them that love of Christ which constrained them to proclaim the gospel. They had no factious spirit, they were neither of the party of Cephas or of Paul, but of Christ only; they knew "nothing amongst men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Oh, that we had more of such preachers in this age. John Wesley, in modern times, was one of the splendid examples of this class of preachers, he broke himself off from all sects, and would, I have no doubt, have recoiled with pain at the idea of a sect ever being formed bearing his name. Observe, Secondly:

The apostle's *sublime magnanimity in relation to all preachers.*

"What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." He overlooks the motives that prompt men to proclaim Christ in his exultation in the fact that Christ was preached. The motives belong to God, and He will deal with them; the message is for humanity, and its proclamation by every tongue would render service. Should we not enter into this spirit? If the gospel is preached, whether by Papists or Protestants, Ritualists or Evangelicals, Churchmen or Dissenters, what matters to us so long as it is

preached? So long as the clarion sends its blast to warn those who have never before heard of the approaching danger, what matters it whose lungs supply the breath? Let us try to catch the magnanimous spirit of Paul, and to imitate his splendid example in this respect.

"I saw one man, armed simply with  
God's word,  
Enter the soul of many fellow men,  
And pierce them sharply as a two-  
edged sword.  
While conscience echoed back his  
words again,  
Till, even as showers of fertilising  
rain  
Sink through the bosom of the valley  
clod,  
So their hearts opened to the whole-  
some pain,  
And hundreds knelt upon the flowery  
sod,  
One good man's earnest prayer, the  
link 'twixt them and God."

## *Germes of Thought.*

### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

#### Christ Received into the Soul and Developed in the Life.

"AS YE HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK YE IN HIM."—Col. ii. 3.

"Did it ever occur to you," says Dean Howson, "to count the number of times in St. Paul's Epistles in which the phrase 'in Christ,' and its equivalents 'in Him', and 'in the Lord'

is to be found?" Independent of its equivalents we find the phrase "in Christ" no less than thirty-three times. This being so, the necessary inference is that to Paul the expression had a significance most vital and transcen-

dent. To him it meant the whole of personal Christianity or Christliness. The words lead us to consider two things :—

#### I. THE RECEPTION OF CHRIST INTO THE SOUL.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord” — the Divinely Anointed Saviour and Master. What is it to receive Him into the soul? Something more than the attainment of an acquaintance with His biography, or a knowledge of His doctrines. It means, First: To receive Him as the *exclusive ground of our faith*. He is *the truth*. All theological theories and credenda are to be tried by Him, and at best are only as shadows compared to Him, the grand Reality. “Other foundations can no man lay,” &c. The expression means, Secondly: To receive Him as the *paramount object of affection*. To crave for an object on which to


centre the affections is one of the laws of mind. Men centre their affections on immoral and worthless objects, and this is their guilt and ruin. The one real object is Christ, the supremely good and beautiful, the highest ideal of excellence, incarnated. The expression means, Thirdly: To receive Him as the *master inspiration of life*. This indeed is involved in the other two, for whatever is the settled ground of our faith and the paramount object of our affection, will be the imperial inspiration of our souls. The expression means, Fourthly: To receive Him as the *supreme ideal of character*. This Paul felt when he said “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” In the realisation of this ideal is our perfection and heaven, there is nothing higher to live for

or to labour for. The words lead us to consider—

## II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRIST IN THE LIFE.

“So walk ye in Him.” If Christ is in you, in the senses indicated, you will live in Him and walk in Him. Life is a walk. All human beings are moving forwards, never retracing, never stationary, never pausing, onward to the grave, retribution, and eternity. But all men have not the same *moral* walk, some walk one way, some another, and the walk is determined by the reigning objects within the soul. Some walk in sensuality and the life is gross, muddy; and foul. Some walk in Mammon, and the life is sordid, grubby, materialistic. Some walk in fashion and the life is vapid and volatile, a mere butterfly in the air, a bubble on the stream. Some walk in philosophy and the life is intellectual, a life of in-

quiries, theories, speculations. But he who walks in Christ walks as a full man, a man all round, to use the language of the apostle, elsewhere, he is “complete in Christ.” A walk this in which all the passions and powers of the soul act, play in their full proportion and harmony, a walk through salubrious breezes and melodious soundsunderskies of azure, amid scenes of transporting beauty and grandeur.

CONCLUSION. Mark well, then, that true religion or Christliness is to be received: It does not come from the intuitions of the soul or the deductions of reason, it comes from without. Christ is to be *received*. “Behold I stand at the door and knock,” &c. Mark, too, that true Christliness has a practical development, it rules the life. It is not a mere sentiment, theory, or ceremony, it is a grand and every day walk. 

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and ELLICOTT, and FARRER's more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

## No. XII.

### DEATH TO EVIL.

"MORTIFY THEREFORE YOUR MEMBERS WHICH ARE UPON THE EARTH; FORNICATION, UNCLEANNESS, INORDINATE AFFECTION, EVIL CONCUISCENCE, AND COVETOUSNESS, WHICH IS IDOLATRY: FOR WHICH THINGS' SAKE THE WRATH OF GOD COMETH ON THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE: IN THE WHICH YE ALSO WALK SOME TIME, WHEN YE LIVED IN THEM. BUT NOW YE ALSO PUT OFF ALL THESE; ANGER, WRATH, MALICE, BLASPHEMY, FILTHY COMMUNICATION OUT OF YOUR MOUTH. LIE NOT ONE TO ANOTHER, SEEING THAT YE HAVE PUT OFF THE OLD MAN WITH HIS DEEDS, AND HAVE PUT ON NEW MAN, WHICH IS RENEWED IN KNOWLEDGE AFTER THE IMAGE OF HIM THAT CREATED HIM: WHERE THERE IS NEITHER GREEK NOR JEW, CIRCUMCISION NOR UNCIRCUMCISION, BARBARIAN, SCYTHIAN, BOND NOR FREE: BUT CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL."—*Col. iii. 5-11.*

THE central thought around which the strange and striking ideas of these sentences gather is "Death to Evil." St. Paul exhorts us to put evil to death, to make a corpse of it. Here we have truly "*Mors janua vitæ.*" We inquire—

I. IN WHAT THIS DEATH CONSISTS? "Put to death your members which are upon the earth." The meaning seems to be the same as Christ's command "If thine eye offend thee pluck it out," &c. Neither Christ's or Paul's injunction can mean hack, hew,



maim the limbs and organs of the body. For that is contradicted by such other teaching as "Yield your members as the instruments of righteousness," and such disabling of limbs and organs would be useless, for the dumb can be profane, and the blind lustful, and the crippled dishonest. "Out of the heart proceeds evil." The figure in the injunction of our text may be that which the whole context suggests, namely put these members to death so far as evil practices are concerned, be as dead to them. Or the figure may have reference to that which describes the entire sinful character as "the old man," an old man having limbs, organs, &c., here called members. So these physical members are but symbols of the moral. Anyhow, there is clearly enjoined here—First: *Death to corrupt living*. This corrupt living is divided here into two classes—impurity, and covetousness. These divided between them include the whole domain of sin and selfishness. Covet-

ousness, which is cherished by many who have the repute of respectability or even of Christianity, is so base, so loathsome, so irreligious, that it is here linked with hideous uncleanness, and is distinctly declared to be idolatrous. Avarice becomes the worldling's religion; greed of gain the miser's worship. Evils such as these, and on which the apostle says God's wrath rests, must be slain. Second: *Death to wrong conversation*. Paul deals with the sins of speech which seemed like echoes of the past to linger on the lips of the Colossians. They are to put off (1) "Anger," *i.e.*, settled hatred. (2) Wrath, *i.e.*, tumultuous outburst of passion. (3) Malice, *i.e.*, malignity, spitefulness. (4) Blasphemy, *i.e.*, slandering. (5) Foul-mouthed abuse; *i.e.*, all such rough speech that now is known as the Billingsgate, of social, political, or theological controversy. (6) Falsehood; a word, alas, that needs no description. All these six evils of speech are to be slain. Third: *Death to*

*conventional distinctions.*

The special errors that we have seen were prevalent at Colosse were those that primarily led Paul to deal with this evil. Four conventional distinctions, that wherever they separate men's interests, or destroy their mutual sympathies, must be slain, are here described. (1)

*National:* Greek and Jew.

(2) *Ceremonial:* circumcision or uncircumcision.

(3) *Culture:* barbarian, Scythian. Maxmuller finely shows how, until Christianity inserted the word brother instead of barbarian, as descriptive of humanity, there was no science of language. (4)

*Social:* "bond or free." There seems to be special reference here to the runaway slave who was going to carry to his master the apostle's letter, and who was to be received as a brother, both Philemon's and Paul's. We enquire

II. HOW THIS DEATH IS TO BE EFFECTED? Evil does not die of itself, but must be slain; nor does it die easily, it must be struggled with. It is to be put to death, First:

*By human endeavour.*

"Put to death;" you are *wrestler* in some tragic game; *soldier* in the momentous battle; *executioner* in the solemn judgment, therefore you must throw your opponent, slay your enemy, hang or gibbet the culprit. Here is abundant and righteous scope for all our fighting instincts. Second: *By divine renewal.* "Which is renewed." The death of the old is insured by the life of the new, just as old leaves are pushed off the boughs and branches by the young vegetation of spring, so the old character is displaced by the new. This power is (1) *Divine*; (2) *constantly put forth*; (3) *according to divine ideal*—"after the image of him that created him." Christ, the Ideal, is Christ the Source of all. He is in the renewed man as the germ of life whose outbursting, as by one blow kills evil, and whose constant development insures all good.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

*Bristol.*

# Is Life Worth Living? \*

A Lecture delivered by H. HASTINGS, M.D., by request, in "Streatham Hill Lecture Hall," March, 1881.



N discussing the subject "Is Life Worth Living," I shall present it in two aspects, that of the *Pessimist* and *Optimist*, and in so doing shall not (as Editors of Newspapers say) hold myself responsible for the opinions advanced by these two philosophers.

Permit me to explain the meaning of these two Latinised words.

A Pessimist is what is commonly called a universal complainer, but the one I intend to introduce to you is a scholarly, thoughtful, studious man, who after much study has formed his own opinions on the subject of life. He may be thus described:—

"The faith, the vigour, bold to dwell  
On doubts that drive the coward back,  
And keen thre' wordy snares to trace  
Suggestion to her inmost cell."

The Optimist is one who thinks everything in life is for the best. He, too, is no coward, nor is he afraid "to trace suggestion to her inmost cell," but in doing so he comes to a totally different conclusion to that of the Pessimist. His standpoint may be thus expressed:

"I stretch lame hands of faith and hope  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope."

Having heard these philosophers argue the question before us in its negative and positive aspects, I shall then leave you to form your own opinion thereon.

Life is a mystery—but, notwithstanding, life is a profoundly interesting subject. Its genesis and ontology, have in all ages exercised the minds and intellects of poets, philosophers, theologians, physicists, and are now formulated into

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\* The Editor, having heard this admirable lecture, considered that its suggestions would be of great service to ministerial readers, whether they adopt all the views set forth or not. Often views which shock our prejudices render us the greatest mental service, inasmuch as they lead us to re-investigate the grounds of our own belief and set the mind on a new and a more vigorous train of thought. The Editor would hereby express his hearty thanks to Dr. Hastings for so readily acceding to his request to allow the article to appear in the pages of "THE HOMILIST."

the following philosophies, namely:—The Agnostic, the Materialistic, the Comtist, the Atheistic, the Rationalistic, the Pessimistic, and the Optimistic. To consider fully such absorbing subjects as these, in their relation to human life and its outcome, would be impossible within the compass of a brief Lecture. I shall, therefore, view them under two aspects, *i.e.*, the Pessimistic and the Optimistic, inasmuch as Pessimism partakes more or less of each of the other philosophies, except that of Optimism.

A Pessimist's view of life and cosmology does not give a very glowing picture, as the brighter shades are almost eclipsed by the more sombre ones, and the life of man is reduced to a doleful existence. In viewing life as an ethnologist and physiologist he considers the great human family from the Indo-European and Aryan races in the burning zone of India, to the Esquimaux shivering at the Pole, and in doing so, he but contemplates nature's eternal laws of dynamics, *i.e.*, cohesion, attraction, and repulsion in everlasting operation, in transforming a microscopic speck of protoplasm, which measures only 1-2,400th of an inch, into an eozoon, an amoeba, a zoophyte, and hence through all the concatenation of life's labyrinth—a man, in whose physical and psychological existence he beholds an inexplicable phenomenon. In attentively studying this speck of protoplasm, throughout its various evolutions, he sees it, in time, assume the organization of a baby, a child, and by-and-bye that of a man; ushered at first into a cold and suffering world—*nolens volens*, uttering cries and kicking as if protesting against been born; laden with infirmities, carrying within it the germs of disease, dissolution and death, whose infancy and childhood are subjected to much suffering and disease, entailing upon its parents much care and anxiety, and on arriving at manhood or womanhood, and entering the world to gain a livelihood, in business—science or profession—he “finds mankind an unco squab,” and receives more kicks than compliments; and even his physiological existence, so complicated and exacting, that it becomes a difficult task to keep the many wheels of life in harmony, so as to attain bodily comfort. Besides he beholds a vast multitude of human beings born, blind, lame, demented, and deformed, as Glo'ster, in Richard III., says, “Sent before my time into this breathing world scarce half-made, and so that lamely and

unfashionable that the dogs bark at me, as I halt by them." The world, a vast hospital—full of the sighs and groans of suffering humanity, the innocent, when on business or pleasure, shivered to a mass of writhing agony, or precipitated into the placid sea or raging billows, by a railway or steamboat catastrophe—man the prey of man, instead of his friend, tricks of trade, selfishness reigning supreme—the cunning financier and swindler occupying exalted niches, while the good and excellent are, perhaps, despised—wars for conquest and not for right, thousands of men slaughtered for a "scientific frontier," and thus the ever-moving panorama of life revolves, vast numbers constantly dying in infancy, or suffering lifelong pains, or "shuffling off this mortal coil" at a green old age, full of infirmities.

The Pessimist in studying even Nature herself can hear no music in the harmony of the sphere "for ever singing as they shine, the hand that made us is divine." He only comprehends them, in all their galaxy of beauty, as a conglomeration of "the fortuitous concourse of atoms," which the concretions of *æons* have developed into amazing masses of matter, rolling in their distinct orbits, by the laws of dynamics, also he considering this cosmos, on which he dwells, in all its amazing variety of hill, mountain, dale, forests, flowers, fruit, rugged rock, fertile plain, swelling seas, placid rivers—or when he digs deep into its interior, and explores its geological formation or its wondrous paleontological museum of dead and extinct animals and human remains; he finds it but a vast Golgotha, a charnel house, filled with the dust of untold ages, which the combining, recombining, and disintegrating laws of Nature have formed and reformed, and are ever going on in a continuous circle; exhibiting phenomena, more wonderful than those of Alladin's lamp. Yet though he admires this beautiful "unity and continuity of Nature," in its ever changing panorama—amid all these incessant evolutions, he learns that many of nature's forces are allied against him, as well as administering to his existence; inasmuch as the balmy zephyr becomes the howling tempest; the placid sea, the surging billows, the fruitful rain, the devastating flood, the gladsome sun, the parched earth; the flowers—though rich in perfume—laden with the poison cup; that the very food which the earth yields to his incessant toil, often becomes his bane; that the winds nip his breath, and produce disease and



death ; that earthquakes, pestilence, and famine stalk through the land—these, and a thousand other forces with suffering and sorrow in their trail—make life, in his estimation, negative.

He also takes a retrospective survey of humanity, as recorded in the history of all ages, and although he finds that mankind has advanced in knowledge, civilisation and religion—yet he distinctly hears, sounding amid these myriad voices of historic ages, the deep bass notes of groaning and labouring humanity—which well nigh silence the soprano tones of joy ; as nearly all these advancements in knowledge have been achieved, through fearful commotions, direful suffering, imprisonment, and even bloodshed.

Viewing man and nature, thus he echoes the somewhat Pessimistic lamentations of the Poet Laureate, and exclaims :—

“ Are God and nature, then, at strife,  
That nature lends such evil ways ?

So careful of the type ; but no,  
From scarped cliff and quarried stone  
She cries a thousand types are gone ;  
I care for nothing, all shall go,  
Thou makest thin appeal to me ;  
I bring to life, I bring to death,  
The spirit does but mean the breath,  
I know no more and he shall be,  
Man, her last work who seemed so fair,  
Such splendid purpose to his eyes,  
Who rolled the psalms to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,  
Who trusted God was love indeed,  
And love creation's final law,  
While Nature red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shrieked against his creed,  
Who loved, who suffered countless ills,  
Who battled for the true and just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or sealed within the iron hills.”

Again, when he considers man as a religious being, he finds him in primitive ages, totally ignorant of God—a Fetish worshipper, awed by the thunder and lightning's forces, the sun's terrific power, and thousands of other natural phenomena. Hence he became a Polytheist and worshipped nature ; ending in the course of ages, among the Semitic races, in Monotheism, while Polytheism still rules among the Aryan and Indo-European races. Man being left all these untold ages to solve the enigma, as to whether there was a God, and if so, who and what He was. Hence the Pessimist affirms that if there be a God, it is marvellously strange, why a said-

to-be good God and loving Father, permitted His children, all these *æons*, to grope in midnight darkness after Him. So much, he says, was this the case, that even in Apostolic days, the acute and highly-cultured Athenians, being unable to find out God, had erected among their numerous statues of gods and goddesses, one to the "Unknown God," and as the Pessimist contends that no earthly father would have treated his offspring thus, but would have endeavoured to instruct them, even in infancy, he considers man's lot a hard one, if current theological dogmas be correct.

The Pessimists, the Agnostics, &c., study also the history of Christianity with a keen critical acumen; as regards its effects upon the human race, and in their investigations thereof, they find that even after a period of nearly nineteen centuries, only a small portion of mankind has embraced its tenets, while the vast majority remain Buddhists, Mahomedans, Jews, Parsees, Heathen, and that even Theologians have deduced from the Bible and New Testament dogmas and doctrines, as diverse as the poles, each affirming:—

" This is the book where each his dogma seeks,  
This the book, where each his dogma finds,"

which dogmas have separated Christianity into numerous sects, causing much bitterness and sectarian animosity—each affirming that his or their interpretation is the correct one, and some even daring to state that unless men believe their creed they will hereafter suffer the pains of eternal fire; and thus, he says, the Babel voices go on making confusion worse confounded—most Christian creeds assigning to Gehenna's eternal flames, the teeming myriads of mankind pre and post-Adamite. He says, "If heaven is to be the possession of Christians only, such a doctrine must consign to eternal woe 320,000,000 Buddhists, 120,000,000 Brahmians, 96,000,000 Mahomedans, 18,000,000 Hindoos, 6,000,000 Jews, some 500,000,000 of other creeds, amounting in all to 1,060,000,000 even of the present generation, without including all those millions of millions of God's creatures, pre-Adamite and post-Adamite, who have slept the sleep of death, and who according to the miscalled orthodox creed are not asleep but in the agonies of hell, even now, because they did not believe in the common Protestant dogmas of salvation.

If this be so, the Pessimist thinks that for a good God, to create men *nolens volens*, under such Draconian laws, with such a fearful

alternative, evinces neither a righteous act, nor kindness, and that God, if indeed, there be such a Being, made a mistake in creating human creatures, as it neither manifests an omnipotent or merciful Father, but rather a vengeful and exacting Moloch, who as a poet says :—

“Sends aye to heaven and ten to hell  
A' for his glory,  
And not for any guid or ill,  
They've done afore thee.”

“Or,” as the late John Stuart Mill said, referring to the punishment of Achan, as recorded in Joshua, “that if such a being can sentence me to hell for not calling him good ; then to hell, I will go ;” and the Pessimist affirms that the unrighteous act of thus destroying innocent men, women, children, and beasts for Achan's offence, merits the verdict.

Besides, he considers that for God to deal with men thus, is unjust, as all men are more or less the creatures of circumstances, and that the religion which they profess depends much upon the latitude and longitude in which they were born. For instance, those born in India, become Hindoos ; those in Africa, Arabs and Mahomedans ; those in Jerusalem, chiefly Jews ; those in China, Confucians ; those in Persia, Parsees ; those in Turkey, Mahomedans ; those in the Pacific Islands, Heathen ; those in England, Christians, &c., therefore, as no one can possibly select the region in which he would choose to be born can, neither elect the latitude nor longitude of his birth, and as all religions are like diseases, more or less hereditary, the Pessimist thinks it cruel and unjust for God to punish a man, woman, or child, for an offence which they did not commit, and over which they had no control—in other words to cast—*e.g.*, a woman or child—into Gehenna's eternal flames, because he or she happened to be born in Constantinople !

He not only argues, is man the creature of circumstances, as regards his religion, as he is often physiologically also, made the “fool” of his organisation—*e.g.*, the balmy breezes of the south, a good digestion, success in business, a good balance at the bank, an amiable loving wife, pianoforte solos and songs, and endearing smiles from his lady love, healthy and loving children, will make him an Optimist. Whereas an east-wind, snow and frost, indigestion, with its family bickerings, over and about trifles, misfortunes in business or speculation ; creditors dunning and no cash in the bank, a sour termagant for a wife, who scolds the children and

abuses her husband, or *vice versa*, curt answers, sour looks, effete atoms and molecules of undigested food, the result of improper diet, dinner parties, too much wine, toothache—any or all of these will make any man a Pessimist, and as all these are the results of physiological laws—the Psyche impelling to that which is good and excellent, the physique to that which is mischievous; and as the best of men, owing to their organization and condition of health, are subject to these changes—even a Paul was made to groan out, “O, wretched man that I am,”—the Pessimist, therefore, thinks that as men are ruled by such inexorable and unrelenting laws that life becomes a hard taskmaster, and like Shylock will have its pound of flesh; neither more or less. He therefore exclaims, with Solomon, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity and vexation of spirit;” or with the Pessimist Job, “Let the day perish wherein I was born;” or with David, who in contemplating the vicissitudes of life, lifts even a Pessimist’s accusing voice to God, and in the agony and bitterness of his soul, exclaims, “Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?” Viewing, therefore, life ethically, physiologically, psychologically, physically, and theologically, the Pessimist concludes that “Life is not Worth Living.”

Having thus given an outline of the Pessimist’s estimate of life, in some of its negations and as the indictment which he has formulated against life is a formidable one, we shall now allow the Optimist, from his Pisgah-summit, to inform us of the aspect in which he views life, as a scientist and theologian—noticing, however, in the course of his arguments—some objections of the Pessimist not fully stated in his indictment, but only hinted at. But before doing so, the Optimist would remark, that he by no means considers that these negations of life, are unmixed evils, he merely views them in regard to theology as a reaction in the minds of men, which have outgrown—as a learned divine has justly said,—“the conceptions of the older theologies—a reaction which is somewhat impatient, often profoundly sad—and theologians, in their blindness, dread and suspect and condemn it. It is not thus that they can help it, not thus they can satisfy the intellectual craving which excites it; not thus that they can meet the spiritual aspirations which are the deepest sources of its unrest. While scientific theology must necessarily be the study only of the few, there are the many who cannot be at peace till their intellects

are satisfied ; and it is the wisdom of the theologian to provide them with intellectual conclusions which are as broad as the conceptions of Jesus Christ. Modern scepticism is, in some respects, a healthy sign. While it is true that a creed of mere negations has not the same power to nourish spiritual life as belief which is positive, if, at the same time, it is reverent and tolerant and humble, there is often far more of living thought and of real progress in the Divine life in what theologians condemn as scepticism, than can possibly exist in belief which claims to have exhausted revelation, and to have attained the sum of all truth." There may be times, the Optimist thinks, when silence is gold, and speech silver ; but there are times also, and especially in these days of unrest, when silence is death and speech is life, and it ill becomes men to hush their doubts, as, " There lives more faith in honest doubts, believe me, than in half the creeds." This much "*in limine*" the Optimist will now reply to the Pessimist's estimate of life, and his objection thereto, and, First : The Pessimist views life and its phenomena, chiefly from a scientific standpoint, and consequently sees only the organic and dynamic laws of nature in operation ; combining, recombining, and disintegrating atoms and molecules into new and correlated forms of matter, eventually producing death. Whereas the Optimist, from a scientific standpoint, too, sees only these natural agencies produce *changes* in these atoms and molecules—but, in no instance, annihilation, which may be scientifically demonstrated thus :—Light, heat, motion, electricity, change into each other, but perish never ; and in death the elements which compose the different organs of the body, only combine and recombine into other forms of matter and existences, but do not become extinct, and though, as Shakespeare makes Hamlet say to Horatio :—

" Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away ;  
O that that earth which kept the world in awe  
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw."

Yet no atom of man, beast, or vegetable, &c., is lost.  
Scientific poetry speaks thus :—

" See matter next with various life endued,  
Press to one centre still, the general good ;  
See dying vegetables life restore,  
See life dissolving, vegetate again,  
All forms that perish other forms supply."



On this subject, the imperishable nature of matter, even Anaxagoras, who lived 500 years B.C. wrote thus :—

“ . . . . . The form of things departs,  
The power remains, no force is lost, in nature,  
But all substantial being is conserved  
With every various form and hue,  
By right of its own essence.”

Quite right, Anaxagoras! echoes the Optimist, as thus the continuous chain of Nature's transforming laws and forces proceeds in a circle. Life being but the school of death, and death but the foster-mother of life. Thus, life and death—death and life, in fact, every meal we eat is a resurrection from death, and lays up for another, and while we think a thought we die, thus the dead animals and vegetables which we consume as food produce thought and life, so that nature, like her artificer, knows no annihilation.

And what, asks the Optimist is the soul's condition in death? Are its high aspirations, affections and honours, its conscious, all-subduing reason—the tenderness, the passion of its being—that intellectual cultus, which can scale the heavens, those swift winged messengers of thought which are, like their originator, Omnipresent—extinct and lost! No! No! the soul, having ceased to be perceptive, is not, as the Pessimist thinks—resolved into water, carbonic acid, ammonia, phosphates, &c.—the elements which constitute its bodily organs, as from the continuity of all natural phenomena, the *immaterial* parts of man's psychological existence, can, *a priori*, no more become extinct, than the material elements, which composed its physical organisation. A thousand illustrations of this might be adduced, but the following must for the present suffice :—

When, *e.g.*, the strings of a violin cease to vibrate, the surrounding air wafts no music to the ear, but the laws of harmony which gave them a musical voice are not extinct, but are ever ready to give forth renewed music, although the senses, for the time being, perceive it not, and cannot detect this *latent* harmony in the air. Therefore, the Optimist maintains, on the principle of the unity and continuity of natural phenomena, that though the *soul* cannot be detected *after death*; it nevertheless has a life as unending as the melody to which it responded.

The Optimist will here quote the ideas of the ancient philosopher, Socrates, on this subject. He says—

"The souls of men not here are born, but travel  
 From the great home of shades into our earth,  
 And hence again to Hades; thus the chain  
 Of life from death, and death from life, runs on  
 In endless cycles."

The Pessimist considers life not worth living, because it is subjected to so many changes, commotions, physical ills, political and religious vicissitudes and such like, to which the Optimist replies, that it is in the moral, as in the physical worlds, and therefore all these commotions, differences, &c., even in the moral world—eventuate in good—just as storms, changes, rain, snow, frost, summer, autumn and winter, in the physical world purify the air, and prevent it from becoming stagnant,—ending in gladsome summer and fruitful autumn. *A priori*, were there no commotions, &c., in the life of man, he would become desiccated—a mere human fossil, with all the liquid rivers of his humanity dried up, with no advancements in knowledge, the result of which would be that life would become a Dead Sea, stagnant and useless, and not worth living.

The Pessimist also considers a belief in God vain and unphilosophic; because no physicist has ever demonstrated the existence of a God on a scientific basis, and asks the theologian, "Where is God? Who has ever beheld His anthropomorphic form?"

The Optimist will discuss these objections from both a scientific and theological platform, and in doing so, will use the *argumentum, ad hominem*, and ask the Pessimist, Where does the wind come from; of what is it composed, and if he has ever seen it? Has he ever seen the air he breathes, and which gives life and energy to his organization? Has he ever weighed the lightning's flash, or electricity? Has he ever seen or handled attraction, gravitation, repulsion, or chemical affinity? What are miasmæ?—the germs of infectious disease, *e.g.*, scarlatina, small pox, &c.? What is the subtle spirit which produces thought, intellect, speech, song, and all the amazing diversified phenomena of organic life, and which energizes the potency and form of all matter, and which has instigated men in all ages to think of a power greater than themselves, and even to construct ships, steam engines, telescopes, and to analyse a sunbeam,—which has caused them to advance from Fetish savagery to civilisation, all of which, have been achieved by and through an imponderable, immaterial, intangible, ethereal something called *soul*, *spirit*, or *life*, which has no anthropomorphic form, which no man has ever seen.

tasted, touched or handled, and yet it is this subtle, imponderable, something which is the active motive power of all animal and vegetable life, which equally moves the ponderous limbs of an elephant, as well as the tiny antennæ of an ant? May it not, therefore, be logically inferred, that God, who is a *Spirit*, exists—although not in anthropomorphic form, notwithstanding that the most elaborate chemical tests or scientific investigations have failed to establish His existence? It is true that no scientist, as the Pessimist states, has established the existence of God upon a physical basis. “Quite right,” replies the Optimist, “because the knowledge of God is based neither on the evidence of sense nor reason; as what are called the proofs of the existence of God, whether ontological, *i.e.*, pertaining to existence; teleological, *i.e.*, the science of the final cause of things; or cosmological, *i.e.*, the knowledge derived from the world, are only possible after the idea of God has been established within us.”\* This being so, the Optimist affirms that it proves to demonstration, that a power—call it God, spirit, influence, or what we may, exists, which eludes all chemical or scientific tests; but which, nevertheless, impelled man to conceive of a power, greater than himself, and also planted in him a consciousness of a God, for as stated previously, no mere organization can produce consciousness.

Again, science also shows that the actinic rays of the *Sun*, *i.e.*, the violet rays beyond the *Speculum*, which are generally invisible, nevertheless, produce strong chemical action, and in like manner, the invisible emanations from the central *Sun* of existence produce upon human organic forms, physical and psychological phenomena, creating in one instance a Buddha, a Zoroaster, a Moses, a Confucius, a Homer, a Plato, a Socrates, a Christ, a Nero, a Newton, a Savonarola, an Edison, &c. No argument, as the Optimist thinks, could establish more conclusively, an Almighty first creating cause than the fact that a speck of protoplasm—the beginning of all existence—is, as far as science can find, destitute of every trace of *organization*, and yet it becomes developed into various animals. In one case, a philanthropist; in another, a monster of cruelty, such as Nero; in another a fish, a dog, an elephant, an animalcula, &c.—thus fully testifying that an Almighty power is the cause of evolving thus from

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\* Max Muller's "Science of Language."

a speck of protoplasm, a variety of existences and consciousness;—but it by no means follows as a sequence that God creates Neros, Caligulas, dwarfs, idiots, and such like. Physiologists have amply proved, and history has recorded the fact, that even in the *ovum in utero*, impressions are made upon the *ovum* by mental and physical causes, through the mother, by the food and drink of which she partakes.

Sudden fright, the terrors of war and bloodshed, cholera, poverty, drunkenness, lasciviousness, and a thousand other natural causes, acting upon the germ of protoplasm *in utero*, may eventuate in producing a Nero, &c., and besides the training of children and youths, may develop either a good or a bad name, or worse, so that the Optimist considers that to make “life worth living” these things should be observed, and thus not have the sins of the parents visited upon their children, as is too often the case.

It is true, as the Pessimist affirms, and the Optimist has no wish to shirk his objections, that men in all ages, even the writers of the Bible, have, as the Pessimist says, represented God, in an anthropomorphic form; attributing to him a human form, with human passions, hatred, love, vengeance, and such like, thus creating a God after their own likeness, as in mythology; calling Him divers names, such as Dyaus, Jupiter, Apollo, Allah, Pater, Elohim, Yaveh, Shang-ti, Ram, Deus, Theos, God. But, as the Optimist replies, that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet: and that these different names by no means change his *unchangeable* nature, they merely show the various aspirations of men to comprehend the Infinite as exhibited in the Holy Scriptures of all nations, such, *e.g.*, as the Vedas of India, the Rig-Vedas of Persia, the Pentateuch of the Jews, the Koran of the Mahomedans, the writings of Confucius in China, the Tripitaka, or Holy Scriptures of Buddha, in all of which are to be found some of the most exalted aspirations after God, and conceptions of his nature as a God of Love, coupled and blurred however, as the Optimist must confess by the most childish diabolical and mythological description of him, in which even some of the Bible writers indulge, by clothing their conceptions of Him in poetic, symbolic, and mythologic language, as the Pessimist affirms, thus proving that the Bible is not authoritative, and he further argues that Biblical criticism, past and present, testifies this also.

The Optimist's idea of the Bible is that it is only a declaration of the



fountain, but not the fountain itself. It is not a talisman sent down from heaven, equipollent in all its parts. It contains but the remnant of a library, the inspired fragments of a national literature out of much that has passed away, that it is but the accumulated aspirations of men, our brethren, in ignorance and sorrow, the instinctive foretelling of the human heart. Like the Æolian harp's wild and broken melodies, responsive to each soft or stormy wind that sweeps its strings, so the Bible in fitful strains, and natural truest eloquence, expresses each pathetic, indignant, or degrading emotion that sways the soul, and hence the Bible's power, giving to mankind the concentrated aspirations, and belief of fifteen centuries of holy, earnest, God-fearing, and God-honouring men. No book extant contains such noble sentiments of dependence, adoration and faith in God, uttering likewise the Almighty hope of redemption from degradation which no other European literature, Greek or Latin, contains. While therefore, the Bible contains much that is human, it nevertheless is the echo of God's voice, using man as His instruments, and in it he also speaks to us by His *Son*, who spake as never man spake and taught, that we have one God and Father, and that all men are brethren.

The Optimist thinks that the position taken by the Rev. D. Angus,\* on this subject, in the revision of the Scriptures, is the rational one. He offers no apology—as too many do—for the inaccuracies in the Scriptures; but like a scholar, bows down to their criticism. In a Lecture of his reported in the “Christian World,” December, 1875, in referring to the present revision of the Bible, and in stating that Acts viii. 37 had been expunged as spurious, says “though we have lost a text,” meaning as regards adult believer's baptism, “we have gained a nice piece of biblical criticism.”† Were all lovers of the Bible to act in this magnanimous way, and not be like good John Wesley, who said “if we give up belief in witchcraft, it is in fact equal to giving up the Bible” unbelief would soon be extinct, and Pessimists would become converted perhaps to Christianity, were its verbally inspired theory, resigned as untenable in the face of Biblical exegesis and criticism.

No sane men believe in witchcraft now, and yet the Bible is not given up as John Wesley said it would be, if the witchcraft,

\* The Rev. Dr. Angus is one of the present revisers of the Scriptures.

† It is also upon this text that the “Peculiar People” base some of their peculiar eccentricities.



it taught were given up, nor will it be *given* up, after it has been purified of all error, but loved more and more.

The Optimist is convinced that no real lover of the Bible and truth, can object to its receiving from the Pessimists and Sceptics, the most crucial criticism, as these interpolated texts and many other records in the Bible, became stumbling blocks to many enquiring minds, and bring contempt and ridicule upon the authenticity of the Scriptures,—the Optimist thinks the sooner these inaccuracies are removed, so much the better for all, and the Optimist would suggest that the scientist and the theologian should shake hands over these difficulties and become friends, each helping the other to solve life's enigmas, and thus make life worth living.

Besides, the Optimist, from his study of the history of humanity, believes that theology, like all other knowledge, is progressive, and has advanced from Fetishism to Polytheism, from Polytheism to Yavehism and Monotheism, and from Monotheism to Christianity. Nor has it yet attained its utmost limits of knowledge, as there is no *finality* in knowledge—for if human knowledge has reached its goal—"it is our duty," as Percy Sturt says in his "Inductive Method of Christian Enquiry," to accept the counsel of despair, and embrace an effete theology." Tennyson in "In Memoriam" expresses this thought, thus,

"Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be,  
They are but broken lights of Thee;  
And Thou, O God, art more than they."

Yes, says the Optimist, truly "broken lights" but only thus "broken" by the different mediums through which they have passed, but though the *light* be thus "broken," it is nevertheless the same light still, emanating from the central source of all illuminating power—just as the rays of the sun in passing through a piece of angular glass, become "broken," that is refracted and reflected into prismatic hues, but are nevertheless still the same light. The Optimist therefore reasoning from analogy, infers—*a priori*—that though all theologies have assumed different creeds by passing through, as it were, the *refracting* and *reflecting* prisms of councils, synods and churches—the light is still the same—though thus aberrated from its true nature. God "dividing to every man severally as He wills," of that light and truth, first to the Jew, then to the Gentile nations.

Did the Optimist believe that the present generation of men had attained its *ultimatum* of knowledge, and that revelation from God to man terminated with the Apocalypse of John, he too would become a Pessimist. But as he believes that in this nether sphere man is but in his pupilage, learning his A, B, C, spelling out letter by letter from the great treasury of knowledge, lessons in cosmology, anthropology, and all the other *ologies*, receiving constantly fresh revelations in all heavenly and mundane things; feeling, however, that he is but as Tennyson says :

“An infant crying in the night,  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry.”

The Optimist is, therefore, content to be a student, advancing from one *form* to another, until he shall be instructed by the Great Teacher Himself, in all wisdom and knowledge; when the dark veil which now shrouds his intellect shall be removed, when the many voices and hubbub of contending *ologies* shall be hushed for ever, and when the only object of renewed humanity shall be to glorify God. This, indeed, is man's chief end, and how best to accomplish this should become man's deepest study. Hence he believes that “*Life is worth living.*”

The Pessimist also argues that the Bible's chronology is wrong, and that its ethnology is false as regards mankind, and therefore he infers the Bible is unreliable. But the Optimist, though alive to these objections, asks the Pessimist, does he object to natural phenomena because scientists do not agree in their interpretations of their cosmical Bible—the world? Do they not deduce from its manifold leaves, and strata doctrines totally diverse? Do not the paleontologists differ as regards its ancient records? Do not the Geologists disagree as regards its bronze, stone, and iron pages? Do not the ethnologists find it difficult to know when man first appeared upon the earth, and do not the whole College of Physicists find it impossible to interpret its various readings, or harmonize its apparent contradictions? The Optimist is not, therefore, astonished when he finds theologians disagree in their interpretations of the Bible, as they are only men, and as all men and women differ in their physical and mental organizations and capacities—no two being exactly alike, the Optimist thinks it is best to agree to differ, and for each to help the other, so as to make “*Life Worth Living.*”

Life, doubtless, has its manifold sorrows, but are not these due

very often to man's neglect of natural laws, and his own imprudence? Are not, for instance—ask the Optimist—prisons filled with criminals, through drink; workhouses crammed, through intemperance and idleness; diseases produced by alcohol, improper food, gluttony, &c.; accidents, both by sea and land; diseases by unsuitable marriages—all of which are often caused by carelessness and want of physiologic knowledge?

The Optimist is thoroughly convinced that much of both the mental and physical ills of life proceed from unsuitable marriages, as both men and women, in selecting their partners for life, pay but little attention (if indeed any) to either the mental or physical organization of each other. Florists, pigeon, dog, and horse breeders are most careful in the selection of the fittest, so as to insure flowers of the rarest beauty, and pigeons, dogs and horses of noble breed; indeed, so much is this the case, that only a short time ago, a law court gave a horse breeder £750 damages because a horse of inferior breed had been sold to him.

The ancients painted Cupid the God of Love, blind, with much wisdom, as men and women are often blind to their best interests on the subject of love. Delicate children, hereditary disease, incompatibility of temper and disposition, marriage, separation and divorce, too plainly testify that in courtship, the physiologist was put in a corner, and blind Cupid substituted to choose a partner for life; but, now that boys and girls are very properly being taught physiology, the Optimist hopes that they will exercise their physical knowledge on this subject of marriage, and not be enchanted entirely by raven locks, courtly smiles, graceful airs, lavender water, name, position or wealth, but become enamoured of a robust, gentle, amiable, kind, and intellectual person, though he or she may be of an ungainly form. How many homes are rendered wretched, and life made not worth living, by unsuitable marriages; and on the contrary, how many homes are paradises by suitable marriages—in fact a constant “honeymoon.”

In every-day life, the divorce courts testify that marriages are not made in heaven, nor, as Paddy said to the priest: “Plaise yer riverince, if marriages beant made in Heaven, are there not *matches* made in the ‘tother place?’” and though Paddy’s wit may provoke a smile, both his logic and physiology are rational, as marriages are often mere love, social, pecuniary contracts, and are not entered

upon as they ought to be, with a due estimation of their physiological and physical outcome. What made the Spartans such a noble race? Was it not the care bestowed, upon properly training their youths, so as to insure a healthy progeny? Thus Herodotus testifies. If marriages be made in heaven, how profoundly thankful should lawyers be for such an institution, as they often get thumping fees to rectify heaven's marriages.

As regards the Pessimist's charge against theology, that the afflictions and sorrows of life are sent by God, the Optimist denies this, and considers that God's character has been misrepresented in this respect, inasmuch, as the sufferings of life, as the Optimist has already stated, are, in the vast majority of cases, except these of floods, earthquakes, famine, unseasonable weather, and such like catastrophes, due to the violation of natural laws by men themselves. But, notwithstanding, the Pessimist is right in stating that even the common lingo on Christian's lips, when disease, sorrow, or death come, is, "O, it is the Lord's pleasure," or, "It is His will that I should be afflicted," or in the case of death, "His time was come," or, as a celebrated preacher said not very long ago, "O, if it is His will to send an east wind to freeze my vitals, and cause me the horrid agony of rheumatism, I will say with Job, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." Or, if I may be permitted (to emphasise the Optimist's argument on this subject), to give a reference to the telegram, which was published in the *Russian Official Gazette*, only last month, announcing the assassination of the late Emperor, in which these words were used, "God's will has been done, and the Almighty has taken the Emperor to Himself." According to this, it was "God's will," that an assassin should fling a bombshell, and shatter to death the Emperor. If this be so, truly as the Pessimist affirms, "Life is not Worth Living."

When cholera was prevalent, many dying from it, a little girl asked her mother how it was that the good God allowed cholera to kill so many people and little children? to which her mother replied, "It is the Lord's pleasure." The deaths from cholera having in one week amounted to twenty in the town where this little girl lived, she said to her mother, "O mother, hasn't God been taking His pleasure last week!"

The Pessimist has not been slow to urge these theological ideas as profound arguments against the Christian's God, as he cannot



see in such a Being, who willingly thus afflicts his creatures, either goodness or mercy. Such a Being, the Pessimist thinks, might represent the Aryan Ahriman, or wickedness; the Christian's devil, whether that of Dante, Goethe, Milton, or Luther, who is credited with causing all manner of mischief, but certainly not a good God, and therefore, he, the Pessimist, thinks "Life not Worth Living," if ruled by inexorable laws.

It is the Optimist's opinion that the Pessimist's objections to life, in a theological aspect are not founded so much upon Christianity as the concretions and corruptions thereof, as Popes, Synods, Parliaments, Bishops and Presbyterians have loaded Christianity with such an immense weight of Paganism and Judaism, that the Optimist believes if either Christ or His apostles were to visit now-a-days, either St. Peter's at Rome, when High Mass is being celebrated, Notre Dame, in France, or a Ritualistic Church, here they would scarcely recognise the doctrine taught therein as Christian.

The late Prince Albert, in a letter written to his daughter in Berlin, as recorded in "Martin's Life of the late Prince Consort," expresses his opinion on this subject thus :

"The substitution of doctrines made by stupid men for laws of God-made nature is the core of Catholicism; \* the good God did not understand how to make His own world, nature is wicked, given over to destruction—a thing to be abhorred. Yet stay. Not so. The good God made it in the beginning altogether good, and the devil has spoiled His handiwork ; it is, to speak properly, the workmanship of the latter, and God is unable to help Himself. Then comes the Church, and helps Him out of His trouble ; she destroys this wicked, degenerate nature for Him, and magnanimously gives Him His own.

This is the true meaning of the flesh and the devil as presented by the Church. Kingsley has depicted this work of the Church in all its purity in "Elizabeth the Saint," and the reader's own nature shudders before the image of what the Church has substituted for God's own work. (*Ersatzgebild.*)"

But the Optimist sees in these things neither the doctrines nor the worship of the God of Jesus, or the God of the Optimist. In them he beholds but a sort of mystery play, calculated to please æsthetical

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\* Doubtless the Prince by "Catholicism" means Christianity, and not merely Roman Catholicism.



tastes, but he fears not to worship in spirit and in truth, and the sooner the optimist would venture to state that such a mythological conception of Him, and such mystery play representatives of Him be cast to the *moles and bats*, so much the better for Christianity and theology, and also towards convincing Pessimists and Agnostics, that there is a God, worthy of faith and worship, when robbed of all Pagan, and even Christian concretions and dogmas.

The Optimist will now consider some of the Pessimist's objections to life from a physical standpoint, and would observe how much can be done to make "Life worth living" by mothers, in ameliorating both the moral and physical suffering of life by proper attention to the moral and physical training of their children, so as to prevent disease, insure strong and robust constitutions, and discipline the mind and affections, and thus qualify them for occupying useful positions in life, and rendering life happy.

But instead of this children are too often relegated to the training of nurses and governesses, while the mothers enjoy the pleasures of life, and in many instances bestow more care, thought and attention upon an ugly pug-nosed lap-dog, than upon their own offspring. If there be one thing more than another which makes "Life Worth Living," the Optimist thinks it is the devotion of parents in attending to the moral, religious and physical training and education of their children, and no picture of life is more delightful to behold than a mother's anxious desire to train up her children in the paths of righteousness, and no picture of life is so sad as to see a mother devote her life to gaieties, spending those hours in the ball-room, theatre, gin-palace, &c., which she ought to have spent in infusing useful lessons into her children's minds by both precept and example.

The Optimist would, however, here suggest the propriety of parents and teachers duly to consider the precepts and doctrines taught children, as their minds are like photographic plates, which readily receive impressions and retain them, but are not so easily obliterated, and he says we are all fully aware of the perplexity and distress which hymns, tracts, and catechism teachings have caused us in after life, and made life to some of us miserable and really not worth living. Take for instance that hymn in Watt's divine and moral songs for children :

“ There is a dreadful hell,  
And everlasting pains  
Where sinners must with devils dwell  
In everlasting chains.”

And this awful teaching is called “ Divine and Moral Songs for Children.” Rather should it be called “ Demon Songs for Pandemonium.”

Life, from an Optimist's idea, is not worth living if spent in pursuit of worldly pleasure, viz., in the chase, gambling, dishonest trading, wars for conquest and not for right—as the Pessimist urges—immorality, selfishness in the rich, spending their thousands on pleasure instead of doing good, and in the case of the labouring and artisan class, in spending the half of their earnings in the ale house, thus saturating the mind with beer, which produces demon acts of wife kicking, ruined health and often imprisonment, banishing from the mind every manly thought and act, while neglected wives and children are perhaps crying at home for food, and the children asking “ Mamma, why does Papa not come home ? ” Such a life is certainly not worth living, and is a curse to its possessor and society.

But the Optimist is delighted to know that thousands, aye, millions of men and women, even among the labouring and working classes, do not prostitute life in this sad way. He beholds the millions who toil in factories, coal mines, railway, omnibus, sailors, cabmen, agricultural labourers, artisans, &c., who labour from early morning till sunset, and even into the hours of midnight, with the sole object of gaining an honest living, and of supporting their wives and families, and who, when their daily toil is over, instead of rushing off to the gin-palace to join their boon companions in swilling beer, snoking and discussing politics, strikes, &c., wend their way homeward with joyful steps to join their family in the cheering cup of tea, and though perhaps wearied in both body and mind, tidy themselves to go out with their wives and families to public worship, an evening entertainment, temperance meeting or such like rational objects, and afterwards retire to rest, after having family worship. Such a life is emphatically worth living, having in it the hope of this life, as well as the life to come ; and what a sad life this would be, to these hard toiling millions, had they no hope of a hereafter.

The poet Burns graphically depicts this scene of domestic bliss :

“ At length his lonely cot appears in view  
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree,  
 The expectant wee things toddling stacher through,  
 To meet their dad wi’ flichterin’ noise and glee.  
 His wee bit ingle blinking bonnily,  
 His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wife’s smile,  
 The hisping infant prattling on his knee,  
 Does a’ his weary carking cares beguile,  
 An’ makes him quite forget his labour an’ his toil.”

Or perhaps after supper the following delightful picture of a labourer’s home, drawn also from the inimitable Burns, is portrayed :

“ The cheerfu’ supper done wi’ serious face,  
 They round the ingle form a circle wide,  
 The sire turns o’er wi’ patriarchal grace,  
 The big ha’ Bible ance his father’s pride.  
 His bonnet rev’rently is laid aside,  
 His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare,  
 Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide ;  
 He wales a portion with judicious care,\*  
 And ‘let us worship God,’ he says, with solemn air.”

How delightful such a domestic scene as this, in which even God participates, where family love reigns and God is loved, and around which angels with outspread wings hover, ready to carry the news to heaven ; in comparison with the drunkard’s home, full of cursing, cruelty, poverty and wretchedness, without hope and without God in the world ; the one retires to rest and enjoys sweet sleep, and arises in the morning with mind renewed and body invigorated, rendered fit for another day’s work, whereas the other retires to his wretched bed, without a thought of God or hereafter, and gets up in the morning unrefreshed, brain muddled with the previous night’s libations of beer, nerves ruffled and temper irritable, a perfect specimen of a Pessimist ; no appetite for anything save his pipe, and in no condition for either mental or bodily labour. Towards the reclamation of this class “ Temperance Societies,” the Optimist believes, have done much, and he wishes them all success, as every such effort gives a mighty impulse to make “ Life Worth

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\* It would be well if in reading the Scriptures all parents, ministers, preachers, &c., who have to educate the young mind, in families, churches and schools, would select the portion they read “ with judicious care,” as many portions of the Bible are not fit for young minds.

Living ;" but as the Optimist is anxious to demonstrate to the Pessimist that " Life is Worth Living," he believes that neither the Church nor Parliament have aided these philanthropic efforts of teetotalers as they should have done.

It is useless to invite a certain class of men and women to attend church or chapel. First, because they have no taste for them : and, besides, churches and chapels are become chiefly places where the height of fashion is found and displayed—in fact, a sort of religious dress promenade—on the Sunday, and where poor men and women are ashamed to appear, in even their Sunday clothes. Why, therefore, the Optimist would ask, with an anxious intent for the present and eternal happiness of these men and women, so as to make this life worth living, and to instil into their affections a desire for the life to come, and teach them that life does not consist merely in hard work, beer, and tobacco, is it that clergymen and pastors and people do not move heaven and earth to open on the Sunday places of interest, instruction, and recreation, where the mind and faculties would be trained to appreciate the useful and beautiful in works of nature and art, instead of only throwing open to them on the Sundays, the degrading, body and soul destroying, gin palaces, which not only induce these men to spend therein their hard earned money, and destroy their health, and harden every innate, soft, and gentle emotion, but worse than all, violate every moral law, and bring upon their young and innocent families an untold wretchedness, and also set before their children an awful example wickedness and crime?

If the fourth commandment, says the Optimist, is to be a moral code, and therefore all museums, &c., are to be closed on the Sunday, the Optimist asks Parliament, Christian ministers, &c., why not be consistent, and also shut on the Sunday public houses, stop Sunday traffic, both by land and water—aye, carriages on the Sunday which convey even bishops to church and thousands of the worshippers, who groan out after the reading of the fourth commandment, " Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law," which, notwithstanding, they have wilfully violated by riding to church? To be consistent, as the Optimist thinks, that " mercy," which they beg, should be extended to their horses and men, who have brought these people to church, and which men were thus compelled to violate the Sunday.

Again, to be consistent, no bishop, pastor, or people, who consider this commandment binding, should make their cooks and servants violate this law by compelling them on the Sunday to remain at home to cook a hot dinner, &c., for them.

It is notable, and the Optimist would emphasise this, that Christ in His use of the Decalogue, *never once quoted* the fourth commandment, He always omitted this, thus proving His consistency, as He came to institute a new commandment—that of Love—not to put new wine into old bottles, as He admonished His disciples in reference to the law, but to act upon the new commandment—that of Love.

The Optimist does not see any objection to carriages being used on Sundays, as it is questionable whether the words of the commandment were ever uttered by God, and in this he is fortified by the remarks thereon, in "The Bishop's Commentary," in which (Vol. II., p. 771) these words appear: "'And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying;'" "does not imply that God did so in an audible voice, but only that Moses was moved by an inward divine impulse to enact certain laws, which, however, he not unfrequently copied from heathen institutions."

Such is the Bishop's opinion. These laws were no doubt proper for the Jews in those days, but why may not our lawgivers be prompted by "an inward divine impulse," as Moses was, to enact laws more in accordance with the spirit of the nineteenth century?

The Optimist has no wish to see the Sunday a day of dissipation, far from it, all he contends for is to make it a day of rest from physical labour, and a day in which especially the religious, moral, and intellectual faculties of men should be educated to behold God in nature and in the artistic works of their fellow men, and thus make life worth living, and he believes that this was Christ's idea of the Sunday.

Let them be thus educated, and the Optimist believes there would be fewer Pessimists, and instead of men absenting themselves from public worship, their knowledge of God and nature would prompt them to attend churches, to bow their heads in reverence before that God whose works they are now in some measure educated to understand and appreciate, and to whom now, life, instead of being a burden, becomes a blessing and is *worth living*.

Considering the negative view of life, which these Philosophers,



the Pessimist, the Agnostic, the Comtist, &c., take of life, the Optimist with all his imagination, wonders why they care to live, as certainly, in their estimation, even as Positivists live must be to them but a dreary void.

“ Who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
The pangs of despised love the laws delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy take,  
When he himself might his quietus take  
With a bare bodkin who would faultless bear  
To grunt and sweat beneath a weary life? ”

When, as these philosophers think, they could so easily end,

“ The heart aches and the thousand national shocks,  
That flesh is heir to.”

But, notwithstanding all the positive philosophy of these men, the Optimist affirms that deep down in the conscious caverns of the inner man, there is an impulsive natural love of life, and even a dread of death. Ah!

“ That dread of something after death,  
That undiscovered country from whose bourne  
No traveller returns—puzzles the will  
And makes us rather bear the ills we have,  
Than fly to others that we know not of.”

Thus, that very *conscience* which these philosophers consider as the outcome of material organization, makes “cowards of us all,” and demonstrates that conscience is something more than organized atoms in action, as the Optimist has already stated.

The Optimist thinks that a subject of vital importance, as regards life, is, namely, is it possible to present the doctrines of Christianity in such an aspect as to commend themselves to such hard keen logicians, as Pessimists and Agnostics? The Optimist believes it is. But it is, alas, too evident that the Gospel preached hitherto to these reasoning and intellectual men has signally failed to enlist their sympathies, as they cannot believe in a God of love, who creates men to eternally punish them, as theologians teach, for if this be so, the Pessimist affirms that the blessing pronounced upon Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth,” makes procreation, instead of a blessing, the greatest curse of mankind, as only a demon would create men to thus punish them eternally, and yet “the God who can do this,” exclaims Rev.

Baldwin Brown in his book, "*Conditional Immortality*," "is the God whom Christian theologians ask you to worship and adore." The Optimist is not, therefore, astonished to find the Pessimists ridicule *this Gospel*, and consider it *bad news*, instead of "Good news." The Optimist would therefore venture to suggest, that instead of preaching such a cruel doctrine as this—so unlike Christ's humane and ethical teaching, preachers were to proclaim the Gospel of the love of God to all mankind, irrespective of creed, sect, name, or nation, and such as Paul proclaimed on the hill of Mars to the Athenian philosophers, and such as he also announced to the Ephesians—were preached from all pulpits, viz., that "in the ages to come, God would gather together in one, all things that are in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, even in Him," thus teaching "universal restitution," which can only manifest God's omnipotence, instead of preaching that the vast majority of mankind will be consigned to hell, thus making the Devil, if such there be, far more *omnipotent* than God;—unbelief would soon become extinct, and instead of scepticism, men would love and adore God as the wisest and best of all beings, really *omnipotent*, God over all, and consider life the greatest blessing. Had God been presented to the late John Stuart Mill in this loving and gracious aspect, instead of the hideous and distorted picture in which orthodox creeds present Him, he would, in all probability, have served Him in life with all that immense talent God gave him, instead of dying like an Agnostic. Not that the Optimist thinks that John Stuart Mill's life was a useless one, as by his unrelenting logic and criticisms he compelled men to investigate the grounds of their belief, and, therefore, his successors are deriving benefit from his keen investigations of dogmas, in morals, civilization and religion, consequently, though dead, he yet speaketh. Certainly, such a life was worth living, and that God who implanted in the mind of John Stuart Mill, such powerful faculties, will take care that neither his labours nor himself shall be lost, for

Nothing walks with aimless feet,  
And not one life shall be destroyed  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God has made the pile complete.

Many excellent religious people think that if such a gracious gospel as this were presented without a devil and hell (as they appear to have far more faith in punishment than in a reformation

effected by love), morality and religion would become extinct. But the Optimist does not believe this, and to show that he is not alone in this belief, will quote the opinion of that exceedingly good Christian man, Rev. Dr. Norman MacLeod, who said that "Evangelism is Judaism; that the Gospel of gladness has been converted into one of lamentation and woe, and if I am bound to stick to the letter of the "confession of Faith," and to believe that all mankind are damned to excruciating torments in soul and body for all eternity, because of Adam's sin and the original corruption springing therefrom, and that God has sent a Saviour for a select few only, and that death determines the eternal condition of all men; then, thank God, I am a latitudinarian, have preached it, confessed it, and can die for it!"

Noble sentiments, these, says the Optimist, humane, Christ-like, and divine, bearing heaven's impress, and "the airs from heaven."

"I find," says John Wesley, "more profit in sermons on good temper and good works, than in what is commonly called gospel sermons, the term has become a mere cant word." Let but a pert self conceited animal that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ and his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, "What a fine gospel sermon," yet not withstanding this dictum of John Wesley, on such an important subject, this doctrine which he designates "Cant" is the prevailing dogma of all Wesleyan sermons!

Now, as sermons hitherto have generally been a mixture of "airs from heaven and blasts from hell," thus making Pessimists and sceptics—suppose all this were changed, and "another gospel" preached, that of love, full of "airs from heaven," and destitute of "blasts from hell," such as Jesus proclaimed, in all probability Pessimists would cease to cavil at Christianity, and consider life worth living; under such a soul-inspiring theology, and the Optimist is delighted to know that thousands of preachers, such as Dean Stanley, Canons Farrar, Wilberforce, Rev. Stopford Brooke, &c., and that pulpits, books, and hymns, are beginning to contain more of the love of God, than the thunders of Sinai, as exemplified in the sermons of our Chairman,\* therefore the optimist sings as he journeys on :

"Let us then be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate,  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labour and to wait."

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\* Rev. J. P. Gledstone.

The Optimist considers that the poet in the verse, has struck the key-note of life. What is the use of sighing over the ills and sorrows of life, as the Pessimist does? Is it not preferable, "to be up and doing," as that life is only worth living, which fulfils the apostolic injunctions—"Whilst we live may we live unto the Lord, and when we die, may we die into the Lord, so that whether living or dead we may be his?" the Optimist, Poet Longfellow, just quoted, urges us *to wait*. Aye, there's the rub, and the Pessimist significantly asks, "*to wait*," but what for? To take our chance at death of a future life, to be annihilated, to be swallowed up in Nirvana, to be transmigrated, or to be cast into the eternal flames of Gehenna?

No, no! an everlasting No! shouts the Optimist, as, were it so, he too would become a Pessimist, and like Job, "curse the day of his birth," but the Optimist's soul rebels against such an awful eschatology, as a libel against God, and his soul aspires to

"A HIGHER HOPE,"

"the restitution of all things." When mankind shall be emancipated from this weary and frail life, and ushered into the glorious liberty of the children of God. When even Diabolus and all his works shall be destroyed, when the atoms, and molecules, which now compose this corruptible body, shall be changed into incorruption—no longer subject to the laws of disintegration and death; when this old battered *cosmos*, hoary with age, wearied with its ever revolving round and round the sun, carrying in its bosom the dust of men and animals for untold ages, and on its wings the sighs and groans and prayers of suffering humanity; as well as the joyous laugh of youth, the song of those that make merry, the perfume of the flowers, the song of the bird, the lightning's flash, the thunder's roar, the tempest's fury, the germs of disease and death—shall be changed into a new creation. When no sin shall blur its face, when no discordant note shall jar the universal harmony, when no Pessimist's accusing voice shall be heard, when no Agnostic shall doubt God's existence and love, when ignorance of God shall hide its head for ever, when all sentient creatures, with their united voices, tuned to one harmonious key, shall join in the universal chorus, which ever swelling and ever increasing, shall by-and-by terminate in a grand hallelujah, when "God shall be all in all," and, when it will then, and only then, be fully realised that "Life is Worth Living."

## Homiletical Breviaries.

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No. CCCXXXVIII.

### Communications from God to Man.

"BUT STAND THOU STILL AWHILE THAT I MAY SHOW THEE THE WORD OF GOD."—*Sam. ix. 27.*

THESE are the words of Samuel the prophet to Saul, the candidate King. The prophet had received a divine commission to address Saul on the duties of the high office to which he was appointed; and he says to him at the outset, "Stand thou still awhile that I may show thee the word of God." The text suggests two remarks concerning divine communications to man. I. THEY ARE NECESSARY TO QUALIFY HIM FOR THE DISCHARGE OF HIS OBLIGATIONS. Saul was about assuming an office of enormous responsibility, and Samuel felt that a knowledge of the "Word of God" was of primary importance to him. "I may show thee the word of God" First: The word of God is essential to *enlighten* us as to our duty. On no subject has man made greater mistakes than on that of duty. The greatest sages of the old world blundered terribly on this point. But how clearly it is unfolded in the Divine Word! "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." "Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with thy God." "Whatsoever ye would that men would do unto you do ye even so to them." Secondly: The word of God is necessary to *stimulate us in the discharge* of our duty. Where else can we find motives strong enough for this purpose? In the "word of God" there are motives gathered from heaven and hell, time and eternity, from the beauty of holiness and the hideousness of sin, motives in the touching whispers of love, and the startling thunders of law, motives in every form of language, in every variety of event, above all in the divine biography of Christ. The text suggests concerning divine communications to man: II. THAT PATIENT WAITING IS NECESSARY FOR THE RECEPTION OF THESE COMMUNICATIONS. "But stand thou still awhile that I may show thee the word of God." God's voice cannot be heard in the hurry and bustle of life. There must be the halt and the hush, the pause and the quiet.



First: "Stand thou still awhile" to *listen*. The ear must be opened. "Incline thine ear," &c. Secondly: "Stand thou still awhile," to *interpret*. Ponder the meaning, pass from the sound to the sense, from the symbol to the substance. Thirdly: "Stand thou still awhile," to *apply*. Apply the meaning to your own condition, experience, circumstances.

CONCLUSION:—The words may be legitimately applied to all the good who are pressed down with the trials of life. To every tried saint I might say, "Stand thou still awhile" and (1) Thou shalt have a solution of those intellectual difficulties that embarrass thee. (2) Thou shalt be delivered from all the moral imperfections that grieve thee. (3) Thou shalt be freed from all afflictions that oppress thee.

## *Literary Notices.*

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

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### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW. THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST MAGAZINE. JUVENILE MAGAZINE. CHRISTIAN MESSENGER. THE CHILD'S FRIEND. TEACHER'S ASSISTANT. March, 1881.

These are all serials from the Primitive Methodist Book Depot, and the remarks that applied to the numbers we noticed a short time ago, apply to these. They reflect great credit upon the literary abilities and earnestness of the denomination to which they belong. This number of the Quarterly will not suffer by comparison with the British Quarterly. In fact, in some respects, it is superior, although one-third of the price. The articles on "Bryant, the American Poet," "Spiritualism," and "Theology of the Broad Church," are admirable, and the discourses under the title, "Practical Homiletics," are worthy of a place in the first works of the day.

SISTER AUGUSTINE. C. Kegan Paul & Co., Paternoster Square.

This is a well written life of a noble woman—a woman after the noble and intellectual type of “Sister Dora.” The work is divided into fourteen chapters, the titles of which are: Childhood—Family—Friends and Relations—Charitable Institutions in Coblenz—The First Nine Years of Convent Life—Ecclesiastical Events in the Rhine Province from 1838-1848—Life and Labours in the Hospital at Bonn, 1849-1864—Inner Life and Relation to the Order—Friends in Bonn—The Position of Church Parties, 1848-1868—Hospital Work in Schleswig—Hospital Work in Bohemia—Ecclesiastical Events, 1868—The Years after the Council—Closing Years and death. We quote a passage which not only reveals her saintly spirit, but the unnaturalness of her Convent Life. It was a thought she uttered in the closing of her life: “Whenever I look out from my window upon the fresh green of the trees and the innumerable blossoms of spring, a strange, wild yearning arises in my heart. I should like to leave these narrow walls, and to wander away, staff in hand—whither I know not. Is this temporal earthly spring-time a faint shadow of the spring above, where no tempest can strip the trees of their foliage; and is my heart yearning for that home? Why do I tremble at the thought of that day—that day and hour which is to free me from this narrow human dwelling, and unfold an everlasting spring-time to my gaze? Ah! the painful consciousness of my disobedience separates me from my Father’s heart, so that I cannot hasten to Him with unfeigned longing.”

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WILLIAM C. BRYANT. By ANDREW JAMES SYMINGTON, F.R.S.N.A., Blackie & Son, Old Bailey, E.C.

In this volume we have presented the life, career, and writings of Bryant, the poet. Yes, and more than a poet, an able Editor, a great traveller, a distinguished citizen, a grand philanthropist. Of him it has been said that he had the “wisdom of age in his youth, and the fire of youth in his age.” Reading this beautiful little work full of most exquisite poetry and stirring incidents, in connection with the portrait as a frontispiece, one’s faith in phrenology is greatly strengthened. What a grand face, a majestic brow, luxuriantly adorned with snowy patriarchal locks, eyes that seem

to look into the infinite, and nose indicative of great shrewdness. We feel that only such a man could write such poems, and live a life so grand. The book is elegantly "got up," and will of course have a large circulation.

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THE CREED OF THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN. London: Bickers & Son.

This is a very able and a very suggestive little book on the creed of the gospel of St. John. It is evidently written by a man who is not only richly endowed with mental power, but what is better with spiritual insight into divine truths.

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SPECIMENS OF ROMAN LITERATURE. Passages illustrative of Roman thought and style. Edited by CRUTWELL & BANTON. London: Griffin & Co.

This is a noble selection, occupying nearly seven hundred pages, of choice and well chosen passages from all the great Latin prose writers and poets, on almost every subject in the realm of human thought, from "The Ideal of Friendship" down to "A Lady's Toilette." Those who would have the original utterances of not a few of the greatest writers of antiquity at hand, in a convenient form, under well arranged indices, could not do better than procure this, the only book exactly of its kind. Here more than a hundred authors in their own tongue tell out their thoughts, their dreams, their guesses, and sometimes their historic knowledge, about themes that will never grow old.

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THE INCARNATION OF GOD, AND OTHER SERMONS. By REV. HENRY BATCHELOR. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

This volume contains sixteen discourses, the subjects of which are: Man in the Light of the Incarnation—The Parable of the Fatherhood—The Gentleness of God, and the Moral Greatness of Man—The Three Crosses; or, the Revelation of Christ—Varieties of Life and their Clothing—Life in Christ—Beginnings and Ends—Christ's Contentment that His Disciples should Remain in the World—The Irrevocable Past; or, No Going Back—The death of Moses; or, Lights and Shadows at Eventide—The Christian Conception of the Universe—Things and Persons Here and Hereafter—The Face of God; or, Man in Heavenly Fellowship with his

Maker—The Great White Throne—The Powers of the World to come—Ecce Homo; or Perfect Humanity. Whilst the discourses here are, to our taste, too ambitious in style, and to our theology, too stiff in orthodoxy, we conscientiously pronounce them very superior productions, and very far above the average of modern pulpit productions. They reveal a mind of a high order and affluent intelligence; they have much original thought that radiates and rings in fine rhetoric utterances and scientific allusions. The volume deserves, and will, we trust, receive a wide circulation.

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THE BLANK PAGED BIBLE. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, with copious references to parallel and illustrative passages, and the alternate pages ruled for M.S. Notes. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons.

This is, for many reasons, one of the best copies of the Sacred Scriptures that has ever come under our notice. It contains the authorised version, illustrated with the references of Bagster's Polyglot Bible, and enriched with accurate maps and useful views. It also contains in the appendix a list of all the passages in the Old Testament quoted or alluded to in the New Testament, a very copious and accurate index, extending over several pages, to the Old and New Testament, also a list of all the prophecies and allusions in the Old Testament, and a comparative chronological table of the kings and prophets of Judah, also the Jewish and other measures, weights and coins, mentioned in the Scriptures, and a brief sketch of the Jewish and other sects mentioned in the Scriptures. In addition to all this, and what will give it a special value to Biblical students and preachers, is that there is an *alternate page of blank paper ruled, for manuscript notes*. This arrangement offers peculiar advantages. The blank pages are found always on the most convenient side of the book, and lie firmly upon the table; the notes are by position easily referred to from the text; the printed headings provide for easy reference to any passage; the faint ruling secures neatness and economises space, and the interleaved index enables the writer to turn to any notes he may have without loss of time. The ordinary margins of the text also remain for the briefest notes as usual; the book is printed throughout on writing paper.



## *Leading Homily.*

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### CHRIST IN RELATION TO THE LIFE OF HIS DISCIPLES ON EARTH.

“I PRAY NOT THAT THOU SHOULDEST TAKE THEM OUT OF THE WORLD, BUT THAT THOU SHOULDEST KEEP THEM FROM THE EVIL ” (John xvii. 15).

**I**N this prayer of Christ for His disciples, Peter, James, John, and the rest of the chosen band, there is a remarkable blending of two great qualities—tender sympathy for them, and strong fidelity to duty. He had gathered them around Him, drawn them away from their business, and homes, and relatives, and entwined their hearts closely around Himself. He had taught them to look to Him as the Son of Man, the Sent of God, their Lord and Master. They were not of the world, even as He was not of the world. It is true that they did not as yet fully know Him, nor had they risen fully into His spirit and life : but they were clinging to Him as to One who was True, and Holy, and Good. Already they were separated from the world and were in union with Him, and from



that initial oneness with Him, clearer vision, deeper love, larger faith, fuller inspiration, worthier obedience would follow.

Never was Jesus more loving to them, or more alive to their feelings and welfare, than in the closing hours of His life. Is His care and sympathy withdrawn from them at the approach of His own great agony and trial? Is He self-absorbed, thinking of the cross and the awful soul-darkness, whose shadow is already touching Him? No! He thought of them, and loved them, not less, but more than ever. He foresaw the hatred, and persecutions, and dangers, and labours, that would gather about them as they went forth in His name preaching the kingdom of God. In the world they would have tribulation: the servant could not be above his Lord: as the world had rejected Him, so would it reject them. Christ foresaw all this; and His heart was sympathetic and compassionate towards them. You perceive that in the very tone of the prayer. He who bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of the world, would naturally bear the griefs and carry the sorrows of His chosen followers with peculiar intensity.

And yet He could not pray, "Take them out of the world." The world wanted them. They must go among men, come into contact with them, preach the glad tidings of Christ, be as a "light" amidst the world's darkness, and as "a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid." Only so could the new divine kingdom be established and spread in the earth. Also they needed the sharp discipline and the opportunity for service and obedience which they would get in the world. You cannot live a brave, heroic life, manifest

self-sacrifice and love to God, triumph over temptation, follow Christ, and at last enter into the holy "joy" of Christ, if you are taken out of the world. Christ, therefore, in His wise love, did not pray the Father for their outward deliverance from the world, but for their spiritual deliverance and safety. Christ was never one-sided or weak, letting His feelings carry Him too far either in one direction or another. In His indignation against evil He never lost the fine balance of perfect truth and goodness. And in His sympathy for the disciples He did not allow Himself to swerve from the great principles of self-sacrifice, moral heroism, and fidelity to duty. This perfect balance and harmony in Christ's character is very beautiful. His prayer is tender, yet strong; sympathetic, yet wise; pitiful, yet brave. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

This was in harmony with His own life. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt AMONG US." He came into the world and lived an active, busy life in it. He did not shrink away into isolation, separating Himself from the cares and duties, and sights and sounds of the world. It was a life of oneness and sympathy with the sorrows and joys, and activities and interests of men. No one was ever more sensitive and tender, and quick in feeling than He. While He had all the qualities which make up perfect manliness, He had also the qualities which make up perfect womanhood. His was a perfect, full-orbed, comprehensive humanity, and He felt all the impressions which are received from the various phases of human life with a keenness and intensity proportioned to His perfect humanity. It was in-

evitable in a world like ours that often He was troubled and hurt and wounded to the very quick. All through His public life He was pained and grieved at heart, at one time by His disciples, at another by the multitudes, at another by His settled enemies, the Pharisees and Scribes. And yet never for one moment, not even in the darkest hour of forsakenness and sorrow did He dream of separating Himself from the world or leaving the stern battle He had begun.

There were times when He sought solitude and retirement, betaking Himself to the lonely quiet of a mountain, or the desert, or the congenial fellowship of the friends at Bethany. But this was always after a hard stress of work, and previous to going to work again. When the crowds had been about Him for many days, and He had healed the sick and taught until His strength was spent, He said to the disciples, "Come apart into a desert place and rest awhile." Such brief pauses amidst His seasons of work were in keeping with His love for man ; for He was enabled to come back to the multitudes with new power to heal and teach them. Christ, then, while He was not of the world, was yet in the world, touching and blending with human life to its remotest points.

I.—THE LIFE WHICH CHRIST REJECTS FOR HIS DISCIPLES. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." 1. Christ would not have us taken out of the *occupations* of the world. His own early life was spent in a carpenter's home and workshop ; and it is likely also that He had Himself worked at that trade. The people criticising Him and His teaching under the influence of their social prejudice, said to one another, "Is not this the carpenter?" Afterwards His public

life was full of toil as Healer and Teacher. He knew what it was to finish the day with a tired body, His strength exhausted. He knew what it was to see the sun go down, and be thankful for the darkness that brought Him rest. There is a pathetic touch in St. Mark's description of Christ working until He had barely strength enough left to walk down to the shore, and into the boat which the disciples had brought for Him. And Christ would have "every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God." Men are to go into the market, and the store, and the busy streets, and live and work in the common work-a-day world. Nothing that is not unlawful and evil in itself is to be forsaken or cast aside. We are to be busy. We are to be physicians, sailors, teachers, masters, servants. It is God's will that I should build houses, be a merchant, till the ground, be a carpenter—is he mistaken who thinks thus? Rather he is wrong who engages in the occupations of life, with the feeling that they are something unreligious and worldly.

There is sometimes a tone adopted in relation to these things which is meant to be a tone of emphatic sanctity and high spirituality. Wherefore should a man spend himself in such pursuits! Wherefore give his thought and energy to such perishable things! Wherefore labour beyond what is barely necessary for the little while he has to stay in the world! What is time? It is nothing: eternity is everything! What is earth? It is nothing: heaven is all! What is human life? It is a vapour: only the future is real! Fling aside every book but the Bible! Turn away from the visible and transient; contemplate only the invisible and eternal! This is meant to be true unworldliness;

a heavenly and heavenward life. What is it in reality? Un-Christlike separation from the world. Weak sentimentalism that misreads the Spirit of Christ and the will of Providence.

2. Christ would not have us taken away from our *fellow men*. Have we not all one Father? "When ye pray say, Our Father who art in heaven." All men are our brothers, the evil and weak as well as the good and great. Christ Himself kept up a close contact with men of all classes. He gathered men as disciples around him, bore with their littleness and prejudice and slowness of heart, loved them unto the end, and loved them into large and noble goodness. He went into the homes of Pharisees, reclined at their tables, and accepted their hospitality. He was the centre around which the sick and poor and sinful crowded in great multitudes—no one knew there were so many sick and suffering folk in the cities and villages until His presence drew them forth. Nor did He shrink back from the appalling spectacle, but He drew near to them, reached forth His hand, and touched poor lepers and others whom nobody else dare touch. Even His opponents He met openly. He did not fly away from the cavillings and carping questions of the Pharisees and Scribes. He was wounded by their shafts of hostile criticism, but He never ran away and hid Himself in peaceful isolation. No one ever lived in the midst of men, the worst as well as the best, spreading his energies over all for good, more than Christ did. And He would have us do the same. No one truly follows Christ who separates himself from his brothers in the world, and lives in a little serene world of his own. You can do that. You can shut your door, and brighten your home, and shut out the cries of



distress that are ringing in the air: you can seclude yourself among men who think as you do, and among books that echo your fond notions. But that is not Christ-like. It is selfish. It is cowardly. Undoubtedly it is a trial of patience to mix with some men, for there are some greedy as the grave, cold and cynical as the bitter blast of winter, weak and frail as the yielding reed of the marsh, head-strong and impetuous as the Psalmist's "Bulls of Bashan," still we are not to run away from them. It may be that there is danger in our contact with some men; they may tempt us to evil, put snares in our path—still in right ways and under right circumstances we are not to be afraid to meet them. It is a great crime, and one that is severely punished by spiritual penalties, for a man to cut himself off from his fellows. In separating himself from men, he does that which Christ indirectly prayed His disciples might not do.

3. Christ would not have us taken away from the *trials* of the world. His own life was one of trial. It was a pathway of sorrow that the Saviour trod. One of His names is The Man of Sorrows. What trial is there in human life that Christ did not know? The rugged roads of pain and difficulty over which we tread, are all marked by His footprints, for He has walked there before us. The dark valleys into which we are plunged, and which close around us, are not strange and unknown to Him, for His path lay through the same. And He knew an agony which we can never know, and drank a cup which we can never drink, and bore a cross which we can never bear. And yet He met it all calmly, and with a brave heart, saying when His sorrow was bitterest, "Father! not My will but Thine be done." And He

would have us follow Him in this. As we live our life and do our work in the world, the waves of trouble and sorrow are ever sweeping against us. There is no throbbing human heart, but throbs in pain as well as joy, life is for all a varied web. It is woven of brightness and shadow, tumult and calm, storm and the clear shining after storm. It is all very strange and mysterious: perfect solution of the universal problem there is none. Still Christ would not have us taken out of this and lifted into some placid haven where the sun always shines and the waters are as a "sea of glass mingled with fire." It is not the will of Christ that we should be like plants in the hot-house, sheltered from the keen searching winds of life, and tended delicately: rather it is His will that we should be like noble trees standing half-way up some mountain side, where the storms come, and the winds are wild, and the clouds black with tempests gathering, that there we may grow strong, heroic, fearless in spirit and character. There is something better than a smooth unbroken life of ease and rest and joy: it is better to have danger and conflict, sharp strokes of disappointment and disaster, and to overcome them.

4. Christ would not have us taken out of the *sin* of the world. "In Him was no sin." He saw with clearer eyes than ours the real nature of sin: felt with a truer sensitiveness than ours the curse-ful thing it is. No one ever shrank from evil as Christ did. We shall never know the inward pain He suffered in His contact with human sin. The sinlessness of His own nature made Him recoil with instinctive revulsion from the evil which everywhere reigned in the world. And yet He did not retire from the world and seek a seclusion of

congenial sanctity. As a man plunging into the sea, takes the waves as they come dashing against him, so Christ bore the contact of the world's sin, as it swept in its force upon Him. "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." How otherwise could He save the world? Nor does He pray that His followers should be spared the same stern battle with evil. Here, in the midst of falsehood, mammon-worship, artificiality, vice, He would have us stay awhile and follow Him in His "regeneration." The holier a man is, the more is he needed in the world. The man who is ripe for heaven, is the man who is fitted for earth. Holiness is not only meetness for the future, it is also meetness for work and conflict here. The want of the world is Christ-like men, and no man is too good for the world. He who sighs to be taken away from the sphere of Christian action and duty, before the day of life is over, prays as Christ could not pray. Said He, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world."

II.—THE LIFE WHICH CHRIST CHOOSES FOR HIS DISCIPLES. "Keep them from the evil." There is not to be outward separation from toil and trouble and work and peril, and yet there is to be a very real inward separation from the evil of the world. Every phase of human life has its moral dangers, from which Christ would have us Divinely kept. The OUTWARD life is to be holy, beautiful, unspotted. The disciple is to be the "salt of the earth," himself pure and purifying others by his influence. As in the old story the Hebrew children were unharmed in the furnace, and not even the smell of fire had passed upon them, so Christ would have His followers go through the world unharmed, and without even the trace of evil upon them.

And more than this. A man is only kept from evil as his *heart* is still right and sound in its motives, its thoughts, its emotions, its desires. Goodness is primarily an interior, spiritual thing. That wondrous invisible world of human spirit, which only God can scan—is that clean and pure? The church of Ephesus was outwardly devout, separate from the evil of the Pagan world, unblemished and zealous; but the Lord of the churches looked within, and sent by His servant the message, “I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.” It is not enough that in the outer courts of the temple, which are seen by men, there be grace and beauty, but in the innermost shrine of all, where the highest altar stands, the Shekinah glory must dwell.

This is the life that Christ sets before us. He sets it before us by the example of His own life. He sets it before us in His prayer for us. Hard, earnest, toilsome is such a life; truly a “high calling.” His conception of being kept from evil is not being kept from trial, temptation, work; but from spiritual defeat and defilement. He ordains us as soldiers, and places us face to face with foes; watching us as we fight, and praying as the merciful and faithful High Priest, not that we may be taken out of the world, but “kept from the evil.”

*Redland, Bristol.*

THOMAS HAMMOND.

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# The Preacher's Homiletical Commentary.

## HOMILETIC SKETCHES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

**OUR PURPOSE.**—Many learned and devout men have gone *Philologically* through this *TEHELIM*, this book of Hebrew hymns, and have left us the rich results of their inquiries in volumes within the reach of every Biblical student. To do the mere verbal *hermeneutics* of this book, even as well as it has been done, would be to contribute nothing fresh in the way of evoking or enforcing its Divine ideas. A thorough *HOMILETIC* treatment it has never yet received, and to this work we here commit ourselves, determining to employ the best results of modern Biblical scholarship.

**OUR METHOD.**—Our plan of treatment will comprise four sections:—(1) *THE HISTORY* of the passage. Lyric poetry, which the book is, is a delineation of living character; and the key, therefore, to unlock the meaning and reach the spirit of the words is a knowledge of the men and circumstances that the poet sketches with his lyric pencil.—(2) *ANNOTATIONS* of the passages. This will include short explanatory notes on any ambiguous word, phrase or allusion that may occur.—(3) *THE ARGUMENT* of the passage. A knowledge of the main drift of an author is amongst the most essential conditions for interpreting his meaning.—(4) *THE HOMILETICS* of the passage. This is our main work. We shall endeavour so to group the Divine ideas that have been legitimately deduced, as to suggest such thoughts and indicate such sermonizing methods as may promote the proficiency of modern pulpit ministrations.

No. CLVIII.

### Genuine Piety.

“PRAISE YE THE LORD. BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT FEARETH  
THE LORD,” &c.—Ps. cxii. 1-10.

**HISTORY:**—This Psalm, in tone, spirit, and arrangement, corresponds with the preceding one, and may be regarded as a comment on its last verse, viz., “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Its grand subject is the happiness of the man who fears or reverences the Almighty.

**ANNOTATIONS:**—Ver. 1. “*Praise ye the Lord.*” This is the key-note to all that follows, the happiness of genuine piety.  
Ver. 2.—“*His seed shall be mighty upon earth,*” &c. “A blessing of the old covenant. The seed of the righteous attains to opulence and to heroic fame, which commonly seems the reward of violence



and ambition. The same phrase is used of Nimrod (Gen. x. 8), a similar one of Boaz" (Ruth ii. 1).—*Canon Cooke.*

Ver. 3.—"*Wealth and riches shall be in his house, and his righteousness endureth for ever.*" "It seems," says Perowne, "a bold thing to say this of anything human, and yet it is true: for all human righteousness has its root in the righteousness of God. It is not merely man striving to copy God. It is God's gift and God's work. There is a living connection between the righteousness of God and the righteousness of man, and therefore the imperishableness of the one appertains to the other also. Hence the same thing is affirmed here of the human righteousness which, in ch. xi.3 is affirmed of the Divine."

Ver. 4.—"*Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.*" Calamity is darkness, and into it even the genuinely good are not unfrequently thrown, but on such light not unfrequently arises the light of intelligence, confidence, and hope. "*He is gracious, and full of compassion and righteous.*" Who? The Almighty? It applies pre-eminently to Him, but the

good man is here meant. The good man is gracious, full of compassion, &c. He is so because he is in vital connection with the Fountain of all good.

Ver. 5.—"*A good man showeth favour, and lendeth.*" Or rather, good is the man who showeth favour, or blessed is the man. "*He will guide his affairs with discretion.*" "Blessed is he who giveth and lendeth, in the judgment doth he maintain his cause." *Delitzsch.*

Ver. 6.—"*Surely he shall not be moved for ever; the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*" He shall hold on his way firmly, and his name shall be an everlasting memorial of the advantages of spiritual goodness.

Ver. 7, 8.—"*He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord,*" &c. His heart is fixed, centred in Almighty love and wisdom, he is raised above all fear.

Ver. 9.—"*He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness endureth for ever,*" &c. Paul's language is a commentary on this. "That ye always, having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work,

as it is written, he hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness remaineth for ever" (2 Cor. ix. 8, 9).

Ver. 10.—"*The wicked shall see it, and be grieved: he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away. The desire of the wicked shall perish.*"

"The wicked see that prosperity, which they desire should pass away, increase more and more: and they,

with their wicked desires, gnash their teeth, melt away, and perish."—*Canon Cooke.*

ARGUMENT:—"This Psalm begins precisely where the one before ends, *i.e.*, with the happiness arising from the fear of God (ver. 1), the blessed effects of which are then recounted under several particulars (ver. 2-9), and finally contrasted with the fate of the ungodly" (ver. 10).

—*Alexander.*

HOMILETICS.—The subject of the Psalm is *genuine piety*, its characteristics and its advantages.

I.—THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GENUINE PIETY. There are several expressions in this Psalm employed to represent a truly good man. (1) He "*feareth the Lord.*" What does this mean? (See our remarks on the last verse of the preceding Psalm). (2) He "*delighteth greatly in His commandments.*" Most ignore the commandments of God, some dread the commandments of God, some formally respect the commandments of God. In opposition to all this it is said the good man "*delighteth greatly in His commandments.*" He finds his heaven in them. "I will run in the way of Thy commandments, for Thou dost enlarge my heart." (3) He is upright. "*Unto the upright there ariseth light.*" He is morally erect. He does not bow or yield to wrong in any direction. An upright man is one who is strong in goodness. He does not lean on one side or another, he does not totter, he stands up like a man. (4) He is merciful. "*Full of compas-*

sion." He is neither malign or callous, nor are His sympathies superficial or evanescent. He is "*full of compassion.*" "*He sheweth favour and lendeth.*" "*He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor.*" Such is a rough picture of the good man. See him as here portrayed, inspired with supreme reverence for the Almighty, greatly delighted in following out the divine will, upright in all his transactions, walking strongly and straightly in the path of duty, abounding with sympathies of pity and compassion for the poor and distressed, and scattering favours on all hands. What a noble character! Heaven multiply such. Notice—

II. The ADVANTAGES of genuine piety. "*Blessed,*" or happy, "*is the man that feareth the Lord.*" First: He is blessed in his posterity. "*His seed shall be mighty upon the earth, the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*" This was abundantly fulfilled in Abraham whose seed prospered for his sake. Though in a temporal sense this is not always true, in a moral it is ever so. The posterity of a truly good man often become mighty on earth, mighty in their noble thoughts, high purposes and glorious deeds. Perhaps to-day in England most of the men who are doing the grandest things for the world are the descendants of the good fathers and mothers "*who have passed into the skies.*" Secondly: He is blessed in his possessions. "*Wealth and riches shall be in his house.*" Though circumstances frequently occur which bring the children of godly parents to poverty, it is nevertheless a law that true moral goodness tends to, or makes for, worldly prosperity. "*Godliness is profitable to all things, to the life which now is,*" &c. The man who

gets the Kingdom of God into him comes under the reign of truth, and right, and love ; is on the way to confer temporal blessings on his posterity. Industry, temperance, economy, are the general conditions on which wordly good comes to a man. Thirdly : He is blessed in his influence. "*His righteousness endureth for ever.*" All that is true and noble in him will not only continue for ever, but will continue to work in the universe for ever. Good deeds never die, they have in them imperishable seeds of life and growth. The character of every good man is an exhaustless fountain whence will go forth streams that shall wind their way down the ages, and bless wherever they go. Fourthly : He is blessed in his calamities. "*Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.*" No man, however good, can expect to escape the ordinary calamities of life. Trials are the lot of all. But in the midst of these calamities there falls a heavenly light. "*Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.*" Dr. Chalmers truly said, "The great lesson taught by this simile is the connection which obtains between integrity of purpose and clearness of perception, insomuch that a duteous conformity to what is right is generally followed up by a ready and luminous discernment of what is true. It tells us that if we have but grace to do as we ought, we shall be made to see as we ought. It is a lesson repeatedly affirmed in Scripture, and that in various places in the Old and New Testament : "The path of the just is as a shining light." "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," or still more specifically, "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." Fifthly : He shall be blessed in his steadfastness. "*He*

*shall not be moved for ever.*" "*His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, his heart is established, he shall not be afraid.*" A thorough settledness of soul is essential both to piety, to peace, and to power. A wavering mind implies wrong and insures distress. Moral steadfastness is not immobility, fixation of heart is not quiescence. The Mississippi moves eternally, but is eternally steadfast—so the orbs of heaven, how swift their speed, and yet how steady. They never oscillate, they are fixed to their orbit, and never swerve. Such is the fixation with which true piety is blessed, it is "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Word of the Lord." Sixthly : He shall be blessed in his memory. "*The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*" It may, indeed, be that all men, however depraved and wicked, will be held in "*everlasting remembrance.*" What man has ever lived that has not made some impression on some immortal soul, and such impression will never be forgotten? Will the child ever forget his wicked father? Will not his form ever walk the corridors, and his voice ring in the chambers of memory? But the remembrance here referred to is a remembrance associated with honor, with gratitude and affection. Gratitude builds imperishable monuments for the good and the useful. Seventhly : He shall be blessed with fearlessness of soul. "*He shall not be afraid of evil tidings.*" Of what can a man who has God for his refuge and strength be afraid? It is said that those living creatures, fathoms down in the ocean on the golden sand, are utterly unmoved by the storm that shakes the hills and lashes the ocean into battling mountains. Not less serene is he, amidst all the trials and "*evil tidings*" of life whose heart trusts in



“Him who liveth forever.” Eighthly: He shall be blessed with exaltation. “*His horn shall be exalted with honour,*” or, “His horn groweth up into honour.”—*Delitzsch*. Horn means power, hence it is said, “The horns of the righteous shall be exalted” (Ps. lxxv. 10). He shall become greater and greater in knowledge, in excellence, and in moral dignity. Ninthly: He shall be blessed to the confusion of the wicked. “*The wicked shall see it, and be grieved.*” “Shall see his own discomfiture in the prosperity of the upright, be grieved, showing the outward symptoms of it in gnashing his teeth. Melt away from vexation. The desire of the wicked is evil, and shall perish in the end.”—*J. Murphy*.

CONCLUSION.—“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace!”

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THIS Psalm may be treated in another way—as follows: As a portrait of a godly man.

I. What a godly man should always BE. First: Always reverential and cheerfully obedient. “Delighteth greatly in His commandments.” Secondly: Always righteous and receiving new light. “His righteousness endureth for ever, “and upon him” there ariseth light in the darkness.” Thirdly: Always generous and practically discreet. “A good man sheweth favour, and will guide his affairs with discretion.” Fourthly: Always steadfast and manfully courageous. “He shall not be afraid of,” &c.

II. What a godly man will ALWAYS HAVE. First: An imperishable remembrance. “The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.” Secondly: A Divine exhortation. “His horn shall be exalted with honour.” Thirdly: A determined opposition. “The wicked shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth.” Wickedness is an eternal antagonist to holiness.

III. What a godly man might POSSIBLY POSSESS. First: A flourishing posterity. “His seed shall be mighty upon earth.” This is not always so. Nor is his generation always blessed. Secondly: An abundance of wealth. “Wealth and riches shall be in his house.” This is not always so, but often the reverse. Still spiritual goodness tends to secular prosperity.

## HOMILETIC GLANCES AT THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

[As our purpose in the treatment of this Gospel is purely the development, in the briefest and most suggestive form of Sermonic Outlines, we must refer our readers to the following works for all critical inquiries into the author and authorship of the book, and also for any minute criticisms on difficult clauses. The works we shall especially consult are:—"Introduction to New Testament," by Bleek; "Commentary on John," by Tholuck; "Commentary on John," by Hengstenberg; "Introduction to the Study of the Gospels," by Westcott; "The Gospel History," by Ebrard; "Our Lord's Divinity," by Liddon; "St. John's Gospel," by Oosterzee; "Doctrine of the Person of Christ," by Dorner, Lange, Sears, Farrer, etc., etc.]

### No. CXXIII.

#### Supreme Things in Man's Spiritual History.

"THESE WORDS SPAKE JESUS," &c. (John xvii. 1-3).

EXPOSITION:—Ver. 1.—"*These words spake Jesus.*" Of all the grand and touching passages that make up this, the grandest of all books, the Bible, this chapter stands pre-eminent, so simple in language, that a child can interpret it; so sublime in ideas and sympathies as to surpass the grasp of an angel's intellect. It reveals the heart of Christ as it points up to the Infinite Father and looks down through all the scenes and ages of the race. It is a prayer for Himself, the Apostles, and for the universal Church. "*And lifted up His eyes to heaven.*" "The words ought not to be taken to

imply that He looked up to the sky, and must therefore have been in the open air. The upward look is naturally expressive of feeling, and irrespective of place." It would seem that the preceding words of Christ were spoken on the way from Jerusalem to Gethsemane; and now, as He was about crossing the Brook of Kedron, He lifts His eyes to heaven, and pours out His great soul in prayer. "*Father, the hour is come.*" The hour which He had often referred to, the hour of His crucifixion. This hour was one of the greatest epochs in the history of our moral world; to it all past events

pointed, and from it all future history would take its date and derive its influence. "*Glorify Thy Son.*" "What is meant by glorifying the Son is further explained in ver. 5. But this implies the dark path of death, which has to be trodden before that glory will be attained." "*Thy Son,*" in a unique sense, in a sense that transcends all human conception. "*That Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*" The prayer is absolutely disinterested. What He invokes is something that would enable Him to glorify the Infinite Father. "The glorifying of the Father by the Son is the manifestation of God's glory in the completion of the Messianic glory by the mission of the Advocate, and the future victories of the Church."

Ver. 2. "*As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh.*" What is the idea here? Is it that power over all mankind in order that He may bestow upon some—viz., the elect—"Eternal life?" This is the current idea in what is called orthodox theology. But the words do not convey this idea. The translation of Dr. Samuel Davidson is, "That Thy Son may glorify Thee, even as

Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him He should give to them life everlasting." The following criticism explains this: "'All flesh' represents a Greek translation of a Hebrew phrase. It occurs again in Matt. xxv. 22; Mark xiii. 20; Luke iii. 6; Acts ii. 17; Rom. iii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 29; and xv. 39; Gal. ii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 24. St. John uses it in this place only. Its especial signification is humanity as such, considered in its weakness and imperfection." "*That He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*" "Literally, 'That all whom Thou gavest Him He may give to them eternal life' (Comp. ver. 6). The word '*all*' is in the Greek a neuter singular, and signifies collectively the whole body of humanity given to Christ. The word for '*to them*' is masculine and plural, and signifies the individual reception on the part of those to whom eternal life is given." (See Commentary for English Readers by Bishop Ellicott). Dean Alford's version is, "According as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given

Him to them He should give, eternal life." To me the idea seems to be this:—  
INASMUCH AS THOU HAST GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL MANKIND, THAT HE SHOULD GIVE TO ALL MANKIND WHAT THOU HAST GIVEN TO HIM, ETERNAL LIFE.

Ver. 3. "*And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.*" From what Christ here says of eternal life it would seem

it is not a physical but a moral quality, is not an endless state of being, but an endless moral mood of soul, consisting in a true knowledge of the great God and His blessed Son. Moral goodness is eternal life, and moral goodness consists in the highest spiritual intelligence. "Eternal life consists in the knowledge of the Father as the only Being answering to the ideal thought of God."  
—H. W. Watkins, M.A.

HOMILETICS:—These wonderful words may be taken as setting before us some of the *supreme things in man's spiritual history*. We have here suggested—

I. The supreme PURPOSE OF EXISTENCE. What is that? To glorify the Father. For this Christ prays. "*Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*" What is it to glorify God? It is not laudation, however enthusiastic and continuous. Because vain men are pleased with panegyrics and eulogiums, they foolishly imagine they will be acceptable to the Almighty, hence they compose laudatory hymns, set them to music and call their productions "Services of Song." It is not contributing in any way to the blessedness of His nature, or the grandeur of His being. This cannot be done! To *glorify* Him is to reveal Him in our character and life. Whatever creature works out the nature which God has given him in harmony with His will, glorifies Him. Thus the "heavens declare His glory." The soul that lives as God intended it to live manifests His

glory. Thus we are commanded to glorify God in our body and our spirits, which are His. It is here indicated that we can only glorify God as He glorifies us. "*Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*" As if He had said, I cannot glorify Thee, unless Thou wilt glorify Me. This is true of men; unless God will glorify us by enabling us to live according to His will, we cannot glorify Him. Were it possible for the orbs of heaven to reverse their course and rush into chaos, they would not show forth His glory; it is only as His creatures move in harmony with His eternal law that they radiate His glorious character. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God." There is more of God seen in a divinely inspired and righteously regulated soul, than is seen in all the splendour of the heavens, the grandeur of the ocean, or the beauties of the earth. We have here suggested—

II. The supreme MISSION OF CHRIST. What is the grand object of this mission? To give to all men that which the Father gave Him—eternal life, that is eternal goodness. "*As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*" In this verse there seem wrapt up several glorious truths: (1) That Christ is the Master of the human race. "*Power over all flesh.*" "All power is given to Him in heaven and on earth." His authority is absolute and independent, yet never interfering with the freedom of any of His subjects, and ever more estimating their services, not by their amount, but by their motive. (2) That Christ is the Master of the human race by Divine appointment. "*Thou hast given Him power.*" "The Father loveth



the Son, and hath given all things into His hands.” The Divine right of human kings is an impious fiction, but Christ reigns by Divine right, and therefore we should obey Him, and rejoice in His government. (3) That Christ is the Divinely appointed Master of the human race in order to make us happy. “*That He should give eternal life.*” “*Eternal life*”—or goodness, is the supreme necessity of human nature. Moral goodness is essentially eternal, because God is eternal. Goodness is the incorruptible seed, the perennial river of life, the unfading crown. Sin is death, goodness is life.\* We have here suggested—

III. The supreme SCIENCE OF MAN. What is that? “*And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.*” Sciences abound, the science of the organic and the inorganic, the science of matter and the science of mind; and these sciences are promoted and extolled amongst us. But unless a man knows the true God and His Christ—not with a mere speculative knowledge, but with a spiritual, sympathetic, and practical knowledge—all other knowledges are but meteors that flash across the heavens of mind, and leave the darkness more profound. I only really know the man with whose character I have an intense sympathy, and without this sympathy I know not God; and if I have this sympathy I have moral goodness, and this is “*eternal life.*” The man who has this supreme science has “*eternal life.*” Has it—not the means to it—but itself; has it, not will have it—it is his, he has it already in possession.

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\* For a fuller application of these thoughts, See HOMILIST, Vol. xxv., page 257.

## Sermonic Saplings.

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### GOD REASONING WITH MAN.

“AND GOD SAID TO JONAH, DOEST THOU WELL TO BE ANGRY FOR THE GOURD ?” &c. *Jonah* iv. 9-11.

HE book of Jonah is a strange history of a very strange man ; a man whose piety is real, and whose prophetic life is associated with much that is romantic and exciting. The whole book developes at least the following truths (1) That the regard of heaven even under the old dispensation was not confined to the Jews. Jonah was sent to Nineveh, a city far away from Judea, whose population had neither kinship or sympathy with the Jewish people. It is represented as a bloody city, full of lies and robbery, its ferocious violence to captives is portrayed in its own monuments. The opinion that once prevailed very extensively in the Christian world, and which still prevails to a certain extent, that the Eternal Father confined His interest and communications entirely to the descendents of Abraham is without foundation ; Nineveh, Egypt, and Babylon were as dear to Him as Jerusalem. He revealed Himself to Pharaoh as well as to Moses, and to Nebuchadnezzar as well as to Daniel. Another truth developed in this book is (2) That wickedness, if persisted in, must end in ruin. “ Arise ” says Jehovah to Jonah, “ go to Nineveh and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.” And because of its wickedness it was on the verge of destruction. So it ever is, sin leads

to ruin. "The wages of sin is death." Another truth is (3) That true repentance will rescue a people from their threatened doom. Though the ruin of Nineveh seemed all but settled to take place in about forty days, yet because it repented the terrible doom was averted. "When God saw their works that they had repented of their evil ways He repented of the evil He said He would do to them, and did it not." It is ever so, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him and to our God and He will abundantly pardon."

Amongst the many remarkable and suggestive passages in this book, not the least striking and significant is that which I have now selected for meditation. I shall employ it to illustrate the amazing interest God takes in mankind. This is seen—

I. In His REASONING WITH A MAN WHO IS IN A BAD TEMPER. That the "High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity" should notice individual man at all is a condescension transcending our conceptions, but that He should now enter into an argument with one who is under the influence of a bad temper is still more marvellous. Jonah was "angry," and the intensity of his anger became so intolerable that he wished to die. "Therefore now, O Lord, take my life, I beseech Thee, for it is better to die than to live." Why was he angry?

First: Because of the *Divine compassion shown to the Ninevites*. Jonah had proclaimed their destruction in forty days, and fully perhaps did he expect that the truthfulness of his word would be attested by the fact. But the forty days passed away, and no thunderbolt of destruction came; it was preserved, and preserved by God

because it repented. It seems that he would sooner have seen Nineveh in ruins than to have had his word falsified before the people—his vanity was wounded. He thought more of his own reputation than of the lives of a teeming population. “Doest thou well to be angry?” The question implies a negative. No, “Thou doest ill, thy anger is a sinful anger.” There is a righteous anger, hence we are commanded to “be angry and sin not.” Indignation against falsehood and meanness and selfishness and impiety is a holy passion, a passion that must often flame out in all pure hearts in passing through a world of corruption like this. This, however, was not the anger of Jonah; his anger implied vanity, heartlessness, and irreverence. Why was he angry?

Secondly: Because of *the loss of a temporal blessing*. The gourd that grew up in a night mantled his tent with its luxurious leafage, thus sheltering him from the rays of the burning sun, was felt by him one of his greatest temporal blessings. “He was exceedingly glad of the gourd.” That was now taken from him, the worm gnawed it to death, and as the hot simoon rushed at him, and the rays of the burning sun beat upon his head, he deeply felt its loss, and he was angry; he was angry with God for depriving him of this blessing. He was thus angry with the Almighty for showing compassion to the Ninevites, and also for depriving him of this temporal blessing. His anger seems to have been not a passing emotion, not a momentary flame, but a fire that rendered his life unbearable. “Let me die,” he says. The passions of the soul have often extinguished the natural love of life and snapped the mystic cord that unites the body to the soul.

Now is it not wonderful that the great God should condescend to reason with a man in such a state of mind? Man is wont either to shun the individual who is indignant with him, or to hurl anathemas at his head. Not so the Infinite Father, calmly and lovingly He reasons with His indignant enemy. "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow." God's interest is seen—

II. In his reasoning with a man who is in a bad temper in ORDER TO IMPRESS HIM WITH THE REALITY OF HIS COMPASSION. "Then saith the Lord, thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?" The Almighty here argues from Jonah's pity for the gourd—the plant—to His compassion for Nineveh. The argument is from the less to the greater. If you, Jonah, feel pity for that mere vegetable production which you had for a few hours only, and which you yourself did not produce, conceive of My compassion for the inhabitants of Nineveh. The comparison here implied between the plant and Nineveh, may be expressed in three questions—(1) What is this one plant to the men that inhabit Nineveh? What is the grandest production in the vegetable world, the most stately and symmetrical tree towering as the king of the forest to one human being? The tree is the production of the earth, cannot think of its Creator, cannot itself alter its own position, is the mere creature



of external influences and must exhaust itself by its own growth ; but man is the offspring of the Infinite, capable of tracing his existence to its source, having the power to move as he pleases, and endowed with powers inexhaustible, and ever increasing development ! But if a plant is nothing to one man, what is it to the thousands of men that are found in Nineveh ? You, Jonah, would have spared the one plant, shall not I spare the million of men ? (2) What is this one plant even to the unconscious infants in Nineveh ? “ Wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand.” What is one plant to 60,000 unconscious infants ? Out of those infants will grow sages, poets, saints, kings and priests unto God. What men, in visiting cities, concern themselves with the babes that breathe therein ? And yet the purest, divinest, most influential portion of the population are the babes. The great Father regards the infant population. His blessed Son when here, took babes in His arms and said, “ Of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Even one babe is of more worth in the universe, than the whole vegetable kingdom. (3) What is one plant to even the irrational creatures in Nineveh ? “ Also much cattle.” Though the cattle are below children in the scale of being, they are greater than plants. They are endowed with sensibilities, they have locomotive powers, and for their use the vegetable kingdom exists. God has an interest in the brute creation. “ He openeth His liberal hand, and supplies the need of every living thing.” He feeds the cattle on the hills, makes provision for the finny tribes of ocean, feeds the fowls of heaven, and prepares nourishment even for

the world of microscopic existences. If God thus regards those creatures, with what kindness should we treat them, taking care that they suffer not, either from want of food, or the cruelty of man!

Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of the argument here employed to impress Jonah with God's compassion for Nineveh. To use the language of another, "It is very beautiful, if you linger over it, planting your feet in the steps of it, touching the several links of it as you pass along, you will say it is beautiful. The skilfulness with which it is introduced; the forbearance with which it is conducted, the condescending regard to the prophet's infirmities, the recognition of human excellence, the delicate allusions, the precious truths hidden in them, the accumulation of force as the argument goes on, the comprehensive linking of the different worlds of life to each other—plants, animals, infants, men—the easy transition from one to another, the abruptness of the close, too, indicating in its own way, the completeness of the triumph—all these proclaim the argument Divine."

CONCLUSION :—What subject is more suited to cheer and sustain our hearts amid the somewhat saddening associations connected with the closing of another year, than the truth that the great God is lovingly interested in mankind? \* Every year as it passes bears away objects once most dear, the companions of our youth, and the dear friends of our riper years. And how dark, dreary, and depressed we might feel without the assurance, that amidst all these changes and bereavements the great Father lives on, and feels the

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\* This discourse was delivered at the close of the year 1880.

deepest and most vital interest in our weal! Though years, as they roll on, take away from us, and from our world, those whom we have known and loved, the great Father continues here. He has not withdrawn from the world and left it in an orphan state, dreary and desolate. He is here, here with every human being, here reasoning with the thoughtless, enlightening the ignorant, consoling the sad, strengthening the weak, guiding the perplexed, restoring the lost.

“God liveth ever!

Wherefore, soul, despair thou never!

What though thou tread with bleeding feet,

A thorny path of grief and gloom,

Thy God will choose the way most meet

To lead thee heavenward, to lead thee home;

For this life's long night of sadness

He will give thee peace and gladness,

Soul, forget not in thy pains,

God o'er all for ever reigns.”

### A Prayer, a Calamity, and an Assurance.

“CONSIDER MINE AFFLICTION,” &c.—*Ps.* cxix. 153-156.

WE have in these verses—I. A COMMENDABLE PRAYER. Here is a prayer (1) *For Divine interposition*. “Consider mine affliction.” “Plead my cause.” It is right to invoke the Almighty to help us in our distress. Here is an invocation (a) *For Divine deliverance*. “Deliver me.” (β) *For Divine quickening*. “Quicken me.” Here is a prayer (2) *Founded on a commendable plea*. “For I do not forget Thy law.” What ground have we to expect answers to our prayers, if we practically ignore Divine laws? We have in these verses—II. A SOLEMN DECLARATION. (1) The wicked are in *danger*. “Salvation is far from the wicked.” How great the peril to which sinners are exposed. (2) The wicked are in danger because of their *neglect of Divine laws*. “For they seek not Thy statutes.” Disobedience is not only a sin, but a curse. We have in these verses—III. A GLORIOUS FACT. “Great are Thy tender mercies, O Lord.” Here is a fact (1) attested by the personal experience of every man. (2) Demonstrated by the continuation of sinners in a world like this. (3) A fact which is the power and philosophy of the Gospel.

## *Germ of Thought.*

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### THE PREACHER'S FINGER-POST.

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#### The Faculty of Judging what is Right.

"WHY EVEN OF YOURSELVES  
JUDGE YE NOT WHAT IS RIGHT?"  
*Luke xii. 57.*

THESE words were addressed by our Lord to those captious formalists and sceptics who were not satisfied with the proofs of His Divine mission, which He had already furnished. In Matthew xvi. we are told that the Pharisees, also with the Sadducees, came, and tempting, desired Him that He would show them a sign from heaven. "The signs and wonders that had been wrought on earth were not enough for the questioners. There

might be collusion, or a power like that implied in the charge of casting out devils by Beelzebub, preternatural but not divine. What they asked was a sign like Samuel's thunder from the clear, blue sky (1 Sam. xii. 18), or Elijah's fire from heaven (1 Kings xviii. 38), or possibly following the train of thought suggested by the discourse at Capernaum, now definitely asking, what they hinted then (John vi. 30, 31) for bread, not multiplied, on earth, but coming straight from heaven." In response to their requests

for signs, Here reminds them that they formed judgments concerning the phenomena of the weather, "When ye see the south wind blow," &c., but neglect the formation of judgment upon spiritual realities. "Yea, why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" The words imply—

I. MAN HAS IN HIMSELF THE POWER OF JUDGING WHAT IS RIGHT IN RELIGION. Right is a small word, but a mighty thing, the mightiest thing in the universe. What is right? Whatever accords with the will of the Creator; and of this man has the power of judging. Two remarks about this power. First: It is the *ultimate canon in the interpretation of Scripture*. Assuming that Scripture is of divine authority, it only gains divine authority over us, as we recognise its principles to be in accord with our sense of right. It

may contain nothing but what is reasonable, but it is only reasonable to us as we discover its harmony with our intuitions of the true and the right. We have no standard of truth higher than our own natures. What hermenutical writers propound as canons of interpretation are but the conclusions of human reason. We have to "prove all things and hold fast that which is right," and that which is right must commend itself to our consciences. The other remark about this power is, Secondly: It is *essential to the application of the principles of religion to practical experience*. It is only as men get convictions of the rectitude and reasonableness of religion, that they will reduce it to the practice of everyday life. Hence preachers are to "commend themselves to every man's conscience in the



sight of God." The grand appeal should be not to the passions and prejudices of the people, but to their reason and their conscience.

II. This power is FREQUENTLY DISUSED IN THE SPHERE OF RELIGION. The Pharisees and the Sadducees, and those who appealed for signs, neglected its use, hence the question, "Why even of yourselves?" &c. The disuse of this faculty in religion has ever been, and still is, lamentably common, and the prolific source of innumerable evils. To it may be traced, First: The reign of *dogmatism* in religion. The religious intellect of Christendom is, to a great extent, under the rule of old dogmas that cannot stand the test of the honest, independent scrutiny of individual reason, their power grows weaker as men think. To it may be traced, Secondly: The

reign of *superstition* in religion. There is not only superstition in Popery, but in Protestantism, not only in conformity, but in dissent. Were men to exercise this faculty of judging what is right, the credulity, the sensuousness, the craven servility, the monkish sentimentalism, of superstitious worship would soon disappear. To it may be traced, Thirdly: The reign of *charlatanism* in religion. Never, perhaps, was there an age when charlatanism in the pulpits of England had such a following. Because the people do not exercise this faculty of judging what is right, they follow in the greatest numbers the hollowest pretenders. Oh, that men would of themselves judge what is right, use the divinest faculty with which they are endowed.

III. The disuse of this faculty is MANIFESTLY REPREHENSIBLE. The text is

the language of censure and of blame. The man who does not use this faculty is, First: Unjust to *himself*. He becomes the victim of impostures, he loses his manhood in the current of social ignorance and superstition. If he would break away from its thralldom, rise to true liberty, and regain the sense of manly independence, he must of himself "judge what is right." The man who does not use this faculty is, Secondly: Unjust to *society*. He who does not judge for himself what is right, has no power to rectify public abuses, or to contribute to the raising of his race to a higher level of life. The man who does not use this faculty is, Thirdly: Unjust

to his *Maker*. It is one of the greatest talents with which he is invested, and for it he is held responsible. Woe to him if he hides it in a napkin.

CONCLUSION : — Why, then, do you not exercise *this* faculty? You exercise the faculty for adoring beauty, for accumulating wealth, for investigating nature, for obtaining knowledge, but this, the chief of all your faculties, you neglect. *Right* is the most important thing in the universe, that on which the universe is supported and controlled, and that which will determine your destiny. Why not use your judgment in search of it? If you search for it you will find it, for it is everywh ere .

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THE SCIENCE OF RIGHT.—"This science, under its own name, but more especially under that of religion, has been considered as a matter of mere speculation, and abounding with doubts and uncertainties and difficulties, is as plain and clear as geometry; it depends on facts which cannot easily be mistaken, because the whole world is collecting and observing them; and it has this advantage over other sciences, that all men have an equal interest in the success of their inquiries."—*Williams*.

## A Most Remarkable Meeting.

“WHEN JESUS HAD SPOKEN THESE WORDS HE WENT FORTH,” ETC. *John xviii. 1-11.*

NOT here, nor in other places, does John give all the particulars of the events referred to. What he here records should be read in connection with Matt. xxv. 47-56, Mark xiv. 43-52, Luke xxii. 17-53, and also the reason, perhaps, why John omits many things which the Synoptists record, and states things which they did not record, is probably because what he omits was well-known, and what he adds was not so. The fact is, the narrative of each of our Lord's biographers naturally differs by greater or less fulness, as each regarded the events from his own point of view. Our remarks will be confined entirely to John's utterance, as elsewhere

we have referred to the statements of other Evangelists on the narrative.

We have, therefore, before us an account of a most remarkable gathering, and in connection with the gathering three things are noteworthy—

I. The SCENE of the gathering. — “*He went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron where was a garden, into the which he entered with his disciples.*” “Kedron, a deep, dark ravine to the north-east of Jerusalem, through which flows the small storm brook, or winter torrent, and which in summer is dried up. As it is in the reflective Gospel only that the circumstance of His crossing the brook Kedron is mentioned, we can hardly doubt that to the Evan-

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\* See my “Genius of the Gospel” *in loco*.

gelist's own mind there was present the strikingly analogous crossing of the same dark streamlet by the royal sufferer (2 Sam. xv. 23) ; possibly, also, certain other historical associations (See 2 Kings xxiii. 12). "Thus surrounded," says Stier, "by such memorials and typical allusions, the Lord descends into the dust of humiliation and anguish." "Where was a *garden* at the foot of the Mount of Olives, called Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 30, 36) or oil press from the olives with which it was filled." —*Brown*. To this garden, Jesus, it is said, went forth with His disciples. (1) *Whence?* In John xiv. 31 we have these words, "Arise, let us go hence." Go hence. From this room where I have been speaking to you, praying for you, feasting with you. From this city — Jerusalem — away from the haunts of men.

(2) *Whither?* Into the solemn grandeur and deep hush of nature. To this garden we are here told He oftentimes resorted with His disciples. Some have supposed that this spot belonged to a friend, and that it was a favourite resort of Christ and His disciples. Great souls often sigh for solitude, and all souls morally require it. (3) *Wherefore?* He went there to commune with His Father, to realise His awful mission, and to confront His doom. His going forth with His disciples to this scene, and for this purpose, reveals two elements in His nature, First; His *sublime courage*. Terrible are the scenes before Him, yet with a fearless step He goes forth to meet them. Virtue is always fearless. His going forth reveals, Secondly: His *social sympathy*. He goes forth with His disciples. He

takes Peter, James, and John with Him that they may be near Him in His agonies. As a Man He yearned for and valued the presence of sympathetic friends in His great trials. Another noteworthy thing here is—

II. The CHARACTERS COMPOSING this gathering. In imagination enter this secluded spot. Though night, it was not dark, the moon was at its full, throwing its silvery rays upon the scene. The group is not large, but wondrously diverse; diverse in character, passion, purpose. First: *Christ and His disciples* are there. He is the central figure, poor and sad in aspect, but divinely grand. On Him all eyes are fixed, to Him all thoughts are directed. Peter, James, and John are there. On them, in all probability, there rests a heart-sinking impression that something awful, they scarcely know

what, is about taking place, that something terrible is to happen to the One they love best of all. Secondly: *Judas* is there. He, "having received the sop," at the table, we are told, "went immediately out, and it was night." (chap. xiii. 30). He went out for the purpose of meeting Christ in this garden, His usual resort, there to betray Him to His enemies. In him you see here a threefold development of *greed*, for it was greed that prompted him to this infernal step. "What will ye give me?" this was his reigning impulse. In his case you find greed running; (1) Into *base ingratitude*. What favours Christ had conferred upon this man! But the passion of greed buried them all in oblivion. Gratitude and greed cannot co-exist. Here we find greed running: (2) Into *heartless cruelty*.



Judas handed his Benefactor over to heartless ruffians, and intolerant bigots, to be crucified; greed is ever cruel, it tramples on the rights and lives of men in quest of its objects. Here we find greed running: (3) Into *atrocious treachery*. In Matthew (xxvi. 49) we are informed that Judas "came to Jesus and said, Hail, Master, and kissed Him." His greed overcame all sense of truth and honour, and even moral decency. Greed is always treacherous, always false, it fills the markets of the world with lies and deceptions. Thirdly:—*Unprincipled hirelings* are there. "*A band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither.*" The word "men" is superfluous, and not in the original. Two bodies are here mentioned, meaning the detachment of the Roman cohort on duty at

the festival, for the purpose of maintaining order, and the officials of the ecclesiastical authorities, the captain of the temple, and armed Levites. These men, perhaps, had no personal impressions concerning Christ, no hostile feeling towards Him, but they were there to do their *duty*, meaning by duty, the orders of their masters. In the sacred name of duty what crimes have been enacted under these heavens! Soldiers rifle innocent homes, burn villages and cities, shed oceans of human blood, create millions of widows and orphans, in the name of duty, meaning by duty the commands of men lost to the claims of humanity, the sense of moral right, and of responsibility to their Maker. Such were the men now in the garden, venal hirelings. Notice—

III. The TRANSACTIONS at this gathering. Four

classes of deeds were here enacted. First : Those *against* convictions of *right*. What Judas did in conducting the band and officers into the garden, and there betraying Jesus with a kiss, must have been against his convictions of right, well he knew he was perpetrating an atrocious crime. Hear his own confession, "When he saw that he was condemned, he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matt. xxvii. 4). To sin against conscience is to sin with the most aggravated heinousness. Another class of deeds here enacted were, Secondly : Those *without* any conviction at all. These were the deeds of the "*band and the officers of the chief priests*," who came with their "*lanterns*

*and torches and weapons*" to seize Christ and to drag Him to the tribunal. These men were like "dumb, driven cattle," they were mere tools. Such men are ready for anything at the bidding of their masters, they have no will of their own, no convictions concerning the right and wrong of actions. Alas, how numerous are such men in every age ! Wretched serfs, on them despots build their thrones. The other class of deeds here enacted were, Thirdly : Those by a *right* conviction of duty. Such were the deeds of Christ. (1) Mark His intrepidity. "*Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye ?*" He does not wait for their approach. After Judas had given the treacherous kiss, he retreats perhaps among the band who followed him,

who stand in hesitation. With calm and sublime heroism Jesus steps forward and confronts them with the question, "*Whom seek ye?*" He does not propound this question for His own information, for He knew their purpose well, but in order that they may confess their object, and to impress them with the fact that they could only attain their object by His voluntary permission. (2) Mark His dauntless confession. "*They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he.*" Here I am. Here by My own power and choice, here not as a Victim, but as a Victor. I am prepared to meet you, fulfil your mission, do your worst, my time has come. "No hostile hand can antedate My doom." (3) Mark the moral force of His expression. "*As soon as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to*

*the ground.*" What struck them down? Not physical force, not miraculous agency, it was the flash of His pure soul upon their guilty consciences. They came with deadly "weapons" to seize His body, He by the moral majesty of His looks seized their souls, and they fell as Saul fell on his way to Damascus, fell like the sentinels at the tomb before the angels' withering glance (Matt. xxviii. 4).<sup>\*</sup> (4) Mark His tender consideration. "*Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way.*" They seem to have recovered from the shock, and are on their feet again. And again to impress them

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\* A brief homily on this incident will be found in Homilist Vol. IV., p. 326.

with the terrible wickedness and impiety of their mission, He repeats the question, "*Whom seek ye?*" They reply, "*Jesus of Nazareth.*" If you want Jesus of Nazareth, "*I have told you I am he.*" Seize Mebut let My disciples escape. Perhaps some of the Roman cohort not knowing Jesus personally were about to lay hold on His disciples, and Jesus thus shields them. Thus the "Shepherd seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth not, because he careth for the sheep." In all this our Lord acted *by the conviction of right*, by the conviction that He was doing the will of His Father in heaven, which was the grand object of His mission to earth. The other class of deeds here enacted were, Fourthly : Those done by a *wrong* conviction of duty. "*Then*

*Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*" No doubt Peter did this under the impression that he was doing the right. A conviction of duty probably gave force to the impulse to strike in defence of his Master. But the deed was wrong. "*Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath : the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*"\*

To which of these classes do our actions belong? Are we acting *against* the sense of right, or *without* the sense of right, or by a *right* sense of right, or by a *wrong* sense of right? Crucial question this!

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\* On this point see "Genius of the Gospel," p. 661.

## Peter's Sword.

"THEN SIMON PETER HAVING A SWORD DREW IT, AND SMOTE THE HIGH PRIEST'S SERVANT, AND CUT OFF HIS RIGHT EAR. THE SERVANT'S NAME WAS MALCHUS. THEN SAID JESUS UNTO PETER, PUT UP THY SWORD INTO THE SHEATH: THE CUP WHICH MY FATHER HATH GIVEN ME, SHALL I NOT DRINK IT?"—*John* xviii. 10-11.

WE have three things here worthy of notice:—

I. AN IMPULSE MANIFESTLY GENEROUS, WRONGLY DIRECTED. "*Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the High Priest's servant.*" This fact is recorded by all the evangelists. John only records that it was done by Peter, and the name of the servant of the High Priest — Malchus. The motive that prompted Peter to this act was not greed, ambition, or personal vengeance, it was that of sympathy for his Master; a generous desire

to protect Him. But this impulse, good in itself, was improperly directed, directed to bloodshed and murder. How much good feeling is wrongly directed in this world! (1) There is *parental affection*. How generally is this employed to the advancement of a child's temporal advancement rather than to his spiritual; to pamper his appetites rather than to discipline his heart; to make him independent of labour, rather than to train him to habits of honest industry; to make him a great man in the world, rather than a good man in the universe; to enrich him with the wealth of the world, rather than with the wealth of a Christly character, which is the heaven of the soul. (2) There is *religious sympathy*. The religious sympathy is one of the



most glorious attributes of humanity, but how often is it directed not to the making of our own characters so great and godlike as to be witnesses for God wherever we go, but to formulate and promote theological dogmas, and establish and nourish little sects. (3) There is *philanthropic sentiment*. A love for humanity is an instinct as universal as the race. But this instinct instead of being directed in endeavours first to improve the moral heart of humanity, and working from the heart to the whole outward life, and from the individual to the race, it is directed to the creation and support of costly machinery for lopping off branches from the Upas, applying salves to the ulcers, and whitening the sepulchres of depravity. No man can be improved only by first improving his heart, the fountain must be cleansed

before the streams can be clean. We have here—

II. A VIOLENCE ENTIRELY DEFENSIVE DIVINELY CONDEMNED. “*Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath.*” Did Peter expect his Master to say, “Well done Peter, I value thy generous effort on My behalf?” If so, he was disappointed, strong words of disapproval came instead. “*Put up thy sword.*” In Matt. xxvi. 52, we have an addition to this. “All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.” The words from Matthew may be taken in one of two senses, either as a prediction or as a law of humanity. If taken in the former sense almost every chapter in the history of the world supplies abundant fulfilment. The nations of the earth that have practised war have ultimately been ruined by wars. If in the latter

sense we find instincts in the human soul which lead to the result. Anger begets anger, love begets love, and "with what measure we mete it is meted again." But clearly the words imply on Christ's part disapproval of Peter's deed. How could He approve of such an act? It was contrary to the old law "Thou shalt not kill," and contrary to the law, He introduced, to return good for evil. We have here —

III. A RESIGNATION ABSOLUTELY VOLUNTARY SUBLIMELY DISPLAYED. "*The cup which My Father hath given Me shall I not drink it?*" Christ was in His present condition not by necessity, but as a matter of free choice. He had "power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again." Matthew reports Him as saying on this occasion—"Thinkest thou not that I could

pray to My Father, and He would send Me twelve legions of angels," &c. Notwithstanding this, He submits with filial loyalty to overwhelming sufferings. "*The cup which My Father hath given Me shall I not drink it?*" Observe (1) The sufferings of the good are a "*cup,*" not an ocean. Happiness is a boundless ocean, misery is only a cup in the universe: it is an exhaustible quantity. Observe (2) The sufferings of the good are a *gift from the Father, not a curse from the devil*. It is an instinct of genuine piety to trace up all evil as well as good to the Father. "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" Even hell is a benevolent institution. Observe (3) The sufferings of the good are to be *accepted with filial resignation*. "*Shall I not drink it?*"

# Notes on the Epistle to the Colossians.

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REFERRING our readers for all historical and critical remarks about this Epistle to the able Commentaries of LIGHTFOOT and FELLICOTT, and FARRER'S more recent "*Life and Work of St. Paul*," it is nevertheless necessary to carry into and throughout our consideration of the entire Epistle, what was its main purpose. Throughout St. Paul is dealing with the twofold evil that had arisen in the Colossian Church—an error half Judaic, half Gnostic—an error that was theological and practical. It arose from the wrong conception of matter as inherently evil; and as demanding intervening mediators between the material system of things and God; and at making abstinence from contact with material things, as far as might be possible, very incumbent on the godly. This error has its modern analogies in Sacerdotalism, and in Pietism. To combat the error then and now the *Plenitude of Christ* must be preached; Christ the fulness therefore the all sufficient Mediator, therefore too the all sufficient Consecrator of the material system. The errors of the Ritualist, and of the Recluse are both met by this great fact.

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## No. XIII.

### THE MARKS, METHOD, AND MOTIVE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"PUT ON THEREFORE, AS THE ELECT OF GOD, HOLY AND BELOVED, BOWELS OF MERCIES, KINDNESS, HUMBLENESS OF MIND, MEEKNESS, LONGSUFFERING; FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER, AND FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, IF ANY MAN HAVE A QUARREL AGAINST ANY: EVEN AS CHRIST FORGAVE YOU, SO ALSO DO YE. AND ABOVE ALL THESE THINGS PUT ON CHARITY, WHICH IS THE BOND OF PERFECTNESS. AND LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE IN YOUR HEARTS, TO THE WHICH ALSO YE ARE CALLED IN ONE BODY; AND BE YE THANKFUL. LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY IN ALL WISDOM; TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER IN PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, SINGING WITH GRACE IN YOUR HEARTS TO THE LORD. AND WHATSOEVER YE DO IN WORD OR DEED, DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, GIVING THANKS TO GOD AND THE FATHER BY HIM."—*Col. iii. 12-17.*

This paragraph is part of the practical application of the great principle St. Paul has been ex-

pounding in this chapter; viz., the Christian's death to evil through the death of Christ, and life to

Holiness through His life.  
We have here—

I.—The MARKS of the Christian life. When the Christian life is illustrated as here, by a garment, the analogy must not be pressed too far. For instance, unlike a garment, the Christian character is not ( $\alpha$ ) *merely outside a man*, nor ( $\beta$ ) *separable* from a man. But that character is like a garment: (1) Because by it a man is *known and recognisable*, and (2) by it a man is *adorned*. There are, in Paul's description, eight characteristics by which, as by a beautiful garment, the Christian man is recognisable, and is adorned. i. "*Bowels of Mercies*," which we may paraphrase as "a heart of compassion." Anthropologists largely judge of what physical race a man belongs to by his skull, the Christian must judge of what moral race a man

belongs to by his heart. Tender-heartedness is a sign of the Christian, as certainly as truthfulness, or temperance, or honesty. ii. "*Kindness*:" this is the constant, steady, often noiseless, but always beneficent stream flowing from such a heart. iii. "*Meekness*" for whilst the Apostle sternly condemns mock humility, which the pietistic among the Colossians had affected, he rigorously insists on that self-humiliation, without which no man can be reckoned a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. iv. "*Longsuffering*:" this is a temper of life described in the beautiful word "patience," and it indicates freedom from the intellectual impatience which makes men proud and restive, and from the emotional impatience which makes men fretful and irritable. v. "*Forbearance and Forgiveness*;" which need no

description.vi. "*Charity*;" the love that girdles and holds together all the graces. vii. "*Peace of God*;" which is the peace God gives, and is like the peace He possesses. viii. "*Thankfulness*;" gratitude to God, and to one another, which implies a whole catalogue of virtues.

II.—The METHOD of attaining the Christian Life. The method here described is threefold; Christ's dealing with us, our dealing with one another, and our dealing with God. (1) *Christ's dealing with us*. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." "*The word of Christ*;" by this we understand (α) The word that *came from Christ to us*. It is the word of welcome, of invitation to Him which came through parents, preachers, teachers, lips to us. That word is not to pass away, but to "dwell" in us. (β) The word that *spoke of*

*Him*. Whether it were in Scripture prophecy, parable, or statement, it unveiled Christ to us. That vision is not to pass away, but to "dwell" in us. (γ) The word that *Christ Himself speaks*. He communes with us in the secret chambers of our soul, and what His still small voice says to us there about pardon, duty, God, must not pass away, it must dwell there. (δ) The word is *indeed Christ Himself*. He is the uttered thought, the expressed love from God to our soul. He must dwell in us. (2). *Our words to one another*. We only gain ourselves as we help others. We must communicate what we have received if we are to become strong. i. We are to *teach*. ii. We are to *admonish*. Of this there are many ways. One is here described by *Psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs*.



(3.) *Our word to God.*

“Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

There must be the outpouring of the heart to God.

III.—The MOTIVE inspiring Christian life. (1.)

*Here is the widest description of the Christian life.*

It covers “word and deed.” (2) Here is the

*deepest motive of the Christian life.* “The

name of the Lord Jesus.”

It is the name of Him

who brings God near, who is the reconciliation of all things to God. So that what is truly done in the name of Christ brings the world near God, lifts up human nature into fellowship with God. No wonder that Paul adds, for all this let there be “giving of thanks.” The Christian life ought to be a Eucharist.

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

*Bristol.*

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THE TEARS OF JESUS.—“Jesus wept.” John xi. 35. Not dogmas about Christ, but Christ Himself, is the gospel. Christianity dwells entire only in one bosom. Out of this great world of sentiment, of feeling, we contemplate One, and One only, “Jesus wept.” Of this sorrow, mark, I: Its CAUSES. (1) *The possession of a soul.* With a body Jesus might have wept for hunger, but not for sorrow. (2) *The spectacle of distress.* This was twofold, the death of a friend, Lazarus, and the sorrow of two friends, Mary and Martha. Mark, II: Its PECULIARITY. In it see the spirit with which Jesus witnessed this death. (1) *Calmly.* “Lazarus sleepeth.” (2) *Naturally.* It was a burst of nature. Sorrow is but love without its object. (3) *Hopefully.* “I go that I may wake him.” (4) *Reservedly.* On the first announcement Jesus speaks not a word, offered no commonplace consolation. After that, nature had her way, and broke forth into tears, and the Jews said, “Behold how He loved him.” In all this there is consolation for us. The sisters were comforted. They had anchored on the rock in sunshine, and in the storm the ship held to her moorings.—*Late F. W. Robertson, of Brighton.*

# Seeds of Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to Philippians.

Having gone through all the verses in the Epistle to the Ephesians (see "Homilist," Vol. xxii. to xxviii.), we proceed to develop, with our usual brevity, the precious germs of truth contained in this letter. The following remarks, as a standing introduction, may contribute some portion of light to the whole Epistle:—Notice (1) *The residence of the persons addressed.* Philippi—whose ancient name was Crenides—was a city of Macedonia, and called after the name of Philip of Macedon, because he rebuilt and fortified it, B.C. 358, and afterwards colonised by Julius Caesar, who invested the population with the privilege of a Roman City. It was the first place in Europe where the Gospel was preached by Paul, an account of which we have in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. It was during his second missionary tour, and about A.D. 53.—Notice (2) *The occasion of the Epistle.* The contributions which the Philippians had made towards supplying the Apostle's necessities when a prisoner at Rome, evidently prompted its production.—Notice (3) *The scene from which the Epistle was addressed.* That it was from Rome where he was a prisoner is clear, from chapters i. 1-13, iv. 22. It would seem from the Epistle that he was expecting a speedy decision of his case, and hoped to obtain his release. Epaphroditus had been despatched to him from the Philippian Church with pecuniary contributions for the Apostle's relief, and on his return the Apostle entrusted this letter for conveyance. This would be about A.D. 63.—Notice (4) *The general character of the Epistle.* It is all but free from any censure, and breathes a warm and generous feeling through every part. The Epistle gives us the impression that the Philippian Church was one of the most pure, consistent, and generous, of that age. About 40 or 50 years after this Epistle was written, we are informed that Ignatius, on his way to martyrdom passed through Philippi, and was most warmly received in that city.]

## No. VI.

### THE MAGNIFYING OF CHRIST, THE SUPREME END OF LIFE.

"FOR I KNOW THAT THIS SHALL  
TURN TO MY SALVATION THROUGH  
YOUR PRAYER, AND THE SUPPLY  
OF THE SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST,  
ACCORDING TO MY EARNEST EX-  
PECTATION AND MY HOPE, THAT  
IN NOTHING I SHALL BE ASHAMED,  
BUT THAT WITH ALL BOLDNESS,  
AS ALWAYS, SO NOW ALSO CHRIST  
SHALL BE MAGNIFIED IN MY BODY,  
WHETHER IT BE BY LIFE, OR BY  
DEATH." *Phil. i. 19-20.*

Here the Apostle expresses the belief that all the endeavours of his enemies, especially of those who, he said, sought to "add affliction to my bonds," will turn out to his deliverance.

The word "salvation" here does not refer to salvation of the soul, but to Paul's temporal rescue and security. In the 25th and 26th verses of this chapter, he utters very clearly his assurance that he should be delivered from his enemies and continue with the Philippians for their "furtherance and joy of faith."

It is now many years ago, when a boy, I attended the ministry of Rev. Caleb Morris, at Fetter Lane Chapel, and the sermon he preached the Sunday previous to my first entering his church was on this text. It was his first discourse after a dangerous and protracted

illness, and the proposition he drew from the passage and laid down was that "*usefulness is the aim of every genuine evangelical ministry.*" He then went on to remark that the passage suggested that in order to be useful three things were necessary. First: To magnify Christ. "Christ shall be magnified in my body," &c. Secondly: To render all the circumstances of life subservient to that end. Thirdly: To have supplies of the Spirit of Christ. I proceed, in a somewhat modified form, to give some of the beautiful thoughts of that distinguished preacher.

I. The supreme purpose of life is to MAGNIFY CHRIST. "Christ shall be magnified." Every living man is either an injury or a blessing to creation—every bad man is an injury, every good man is a blessing. Goodness is at once the cause, the evidence, and the measure of moral usefulness. But how is this usefulness achieved? By *magnifying Christ*. But how are you to magnify Christ? Not by making Him *greater* than He is. This would be impossible. His "name is above every name." He is Lord of all, "of Him, and to Him, and through Him, are all things." All heaven feels that He is the greatest; there He is seen as

He is, is supremely worshipped and adored. Hell, too, feels His greatness: "the everlasting destruction with which the lost are punished comes from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power." It is to be done, First: By giving Him the pre-eminence in *your own soul*. Putting Him on the throne of your being, and crowning Him Lord of all, having all the activities and faculties ruled by Him as the moral monarch of the soul. Secondly: By promoting His sovereignty over *others*. Seeking to establish His kingdom, the kingdom of peace and truth, and righteousness over all contemporaries. Sad, terribly sad, it is that many who profess to magnify Him, *degrade* Him. They degrade Him by flippant and irreverent repetitions of His holy name, by misrepresenting His work. They speak of Him as a poor Victim on the cross, rather than as a triumphant Victor, One who, in His sufferings, is to be pitied rather than applauded. They speak of Him as a purchaser of Divine love for man, rather than as its grand Messenger and omnipotent proof. They represent Him as One who seems to be in deep need of man's humble services; and in their hymns they call upon their hearers to "Stand

up and fight for Jesus," as if Jesus were in difficulties and wanted their help to relieve Him. They seem to trade in His holy name. The crafty priest employs Him in order to gain power over the people, mercenary preachers and authors in order to get gain. These magnify themselves under the pretence of magnifying Christ. "The false teachers to whom the Apostle refers in this chapter were guilty of this, as are not a few in the 19th century. For instance, they who take up Christianity with a view to amass wealth, to gain honour, or to subserve political designs. This is very wicked. It is to betray Christianity with the kiss of treachery, in order to deliver it up to the fury of its foes. It is to purchase earthly toys with the blood of souls. It is to drink damnation from consecrated vessels."

II. In order to magnify Christ THE WHOLE OF OUR LIFE SHOULD BE CONSECRATED TO THAT PURPOSE. Observe, First: The *circumstance* of life here indicated, "In my body, whether it be by life, or by death."

(1) *Life* must be consecrated to the work. All its energies should be directed to it; all its faculties should be employed in its interest; all the circumstances, in fact, should be sub-

ordinated to its advancement. "For me to live is Christ," says Paul. "I long," said Bernard, "to be as a flame of fire, continually glowing for the service of the Church, preaching and building it up to my latest hour." Paul here specifies affliction, "I know that this"—that is, his imprisonment—"shall turn to my salvation." "Time spent in affliction is not lost. To a man who stands on the margin of eternity the world appears in its proper light. How worthless its smiles! How absurd its fashions! How trifling its all! Never does the better country appear so inviting as when we linger on its borders, expecting every hour to plant our feet on its happy soil. The odours wafted from its shore refresh us before we land." (2) *Death* should subserve this spiritual usefulness. "Whether by life or by death." So die, die with such calmness, resignation, holy serenity, as to commend Christ to the spectators of the event. Secondly: The *intense desire* that it should be so is here indicated. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body." This was his

"earnest expectation," an expression which implies an intense and painful longing, not only expectation, but hope. There may be expectation where there is not hope. Hope implies *desire* for an object as well as a probability of obtaining it. "That in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always," &c. This was his grand purpose, and he would not have that purpose frustrated so as to be ashamed, but would, with wonted boldness and courage, struggle on to its ultimate triumph.

III. In order to consecrate the whole of our life to that purpose we require THE INTERCESSION OF THE GOOD, AND A SUPPLY OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST JESUS. (1) The intercession of the good. "Through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Christ Jesus." This overruling of all enmity to his safety he hopes for, through the intercession of the Philippian Church (comp. Philemon, ver. 23), and the fresh supply of grace, which, through such intercession, may be given to him. For the word "supply" in this sense see Eph. iv. 15, and comp. Gal. iii. 5, Col. ii. 19. "Through your prayer." By an instinct of our nature involuntarily we breathe

intercessions to heaven on behalf of those in whom we are most vitally interested. This is natural, this is right. Whether intercessions of any kind secure direct answers or not the assurance of them is always most encouraging to their object. If I know that a good man is earnestly interceding for me in my mission I have an assurance that he will use every effort to contribute to my success. Hence Paul always felt encouraged by the prayers of the good. (2) "The supply of the Spirit." "Of the application of this name to the Holy Ghost we have instances in Rom. viii. 9; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Peter i. 11. Of these the first is the most notable, since in two clauses of the same sentence we have first the Spirit of God and then the Spirit of Christ. But the name has always some speciality of emphasis. Thus, the whole conception of the passage is of Christ, "For me to live is of Christ;" hence the use of this special and comparatively rare name of the Holy Ghost." —*Dr. Barry.*—These two things Paul felt would enable him to consecrate his whole life to the life of Christ: "The intercessions of the good," and the "supply of the Spirit of Christ."



# Homiletical Breviaries.

No. CCCXXXIX.

## Will Evil be Everlasting?

“HE HATH APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF.”—*Hebrews ix. 26.*

IN view of the great fact recorded in these words—the central fact of Christianity—we make three remarks about evil being everlasting. I. EVIL NEED NOT BE EVERLASTING IN THE INDIVIDUAL. Every individual life may be forgiven and renewed. Sufficient proof of that is given by Paul in his description of what the Corinthians were, and of what they became (1 Cor. vi. 11). II. EVIL WILL NOT BE EVERLASTING IN THE WORLD. The Pagans dream of a coming golden age, and the prophecies of Holy Scripture concur in predicting the universal reign of good. The kingdom of heaven is as leaven, which is to leaven the whole lump. Paul predicts every knee shall bow to Jesus, &c., John foretells an angel's song which shall announce “That the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God,” &c. III. EVIL MAY NOT BE—THERE IS THE HIGHEST PROBABILITY THAT IT WILL NOT BE—EVERLASTING IN THE UNIVERSE. First: *Because of the Infinite Forces of which our text speaks.* (a) The Infinite Force in the Being who is putting away sin. Who is He? Solomon calls Him Wisdom; John, The Word; Paul, The Fulness. There is no limit to His resources. (β) The Infinite Force in His care for the work He has undertaken. How much does He care? Even to the sacrifice of Himself. That the highest Being has thus the uttermost care for putting away sin is overwhelming reason for hoping that it may at length be utterly put away. Second: *Because of the very nature of evil.* (a) *Is not evil a compound, and a corruptible compound?* Can sin put on incorruption? (β) *Is not evil mutually destructive?* Do not lusts war against each other like savage tribes whose internecine wars end in their own extinction? Third: *Because of the character of God.* Is He not a King so gracious that His victory could not be in crushed victims, but in once rebel subjects restored to happy loyalty; is He not a Father so perfect that His unresting love will never be satisfied till the last prodigal comes home to duty and to joy? Fourth: *Because of the insufficiency of the arguments often used for the everlasting existence of evil.* (a) That moral

beings must always have free choice, and that the choice of good by all cannot be ensured. To this we reply, may not the soul pass through such education, and have such revelations that goodness at last becomes irresistible in its appeal to man's choice? ( $\beta$ ) That some Scripture words and tones necessitate our belief in everlastingness of evil. To this we reply, such language does not necessarily denote endlessness. The only word that does is "endless life." And again, much Scripture tells of "restitution of all things," of Christ "putting down all rule, all authority and power," of God being "all and in all," &c., &c.

CONCLUSION:—Will men refuse to have sin put away by Christ *now*, when it is sure it can be so put away? Will men grieve, and rebel against such love as the truth before us indicates? The greater the love of God the more abominable and hateful the sin of those who sin on, and to whom hell must reveal the cycles of her terrible history before they let Christ, by His wondrous sacrifice of Himself, put away their sin.

*Bristol.*

URIJAH R. THOMAS.

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No. CCCXL.

The Grandest Prospect of the Soul.

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED, AND I SAW VISIONS OF GOD." *Ezek. i. 1.*

Observe: I. The GRANDEST PROSPECT OF THE SOUL. "Visions of God." Of all the sentient creatures on this earth, man alone has the faculty for seeing God. First: Man's visions of God are a *necessity of his nature*. His soul has an eye for the purpose, and this eye is often opened, and sometimes even against his will. Visions dim, vague, often absurd, flit before his mind. He cannot help them coming. Secondly: Man's visions of God are *necessarily limited*. A full view of God the loftiest created intellect through the longest ages will never have; it is only a glance, a dim glimpse of some phase. Thirdly: Man's visions of God are, in all cases, more or less *inaccurate*. The views of heathens how debased, and often how monstrous, and even the views of conventional Christians how unworthy, and often absurd and blasphemous. Fourthly: Man's visions of God are *essential to his well-being*. A truthful vision of God is essential to quicken, to raise, to humble, and to ennoble the soul. Observe: II. The grandest prospect of the soul REVEALED. "The heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God." The heavens of the soul are often so closed by *ignorance, carnality, and worldliness*, that they shut out the view of God. But when these "heavens are opened," when enlightened spirituality cleaves the clouds, then God is seen.

# *The Preacher's Scrap Book.*

## THE WORLD OF CANT. \*



WE observe that the Author has published a second edition of this remarkable book. We are glad of this not only because it shows that already it has done good service among the multitude who have exhausted the first edition, but chiefly because the author in his preface clears us from any share in its authorship. It was of course to be expected that a book which exposed and execrated the various types of cant with which the religious world abounds, should be pronounced an accursed thing by all who live by cant; and, alas, they are numerous. Hitherto we have been compelled to bear all the blame that attaches to its authorship. It will be remembered that one man, Dr. Parker, made one of the coarsest, most vulgar, and malignant attacks upon us in a print of his called "*The Fountain*" under the impression that we wrote the book, and drew the sketch of Dr. Sound, in which it seems he recognised himself. The following is the sketch: "Dr. Sound was a thickset man of about fifty years of age. His hair was brown and bushy and brushed out so as to make the head look as large as possible. His eyes, like black beads, peered slyly out from their sunken sockets. He was bull-necked. His lips were coarse and sensuous, and the whole expression of his face and form suggested that had this man been bred to poverty he would very probably have turned to prize-fighting, rat-hunting, or burglary. He seemed formed for low delights, and entirely out of place in that religious world which he had selected as an arena for earning his livelihood, and gratifying his intense ambition. Nevertheless, he was a man of natural ability, and with this to assist him he made a great noise in the world. It was known to many that he was thoroughly artificial, and that he never spoke from his heart. But mankind are not repelled by a first-rate actor simply by the fact of his

\* "*The World of Cant.*" Second Edition, price 2/6. Wade & Co., Ludgate Arcade.

appearing in a dull conventicle. There were always numbers of people anxious to hear Dr. Sound go through his religious part whenever he acted. He spoke in a deep, sonorous voice, and every phrase was bombastic and inflated in style. His sentences were so arranged as to require at the end a long effective pause. He laboured at grotesqueness and individuality of style, and in this he succeeded. If his hearers did not recollect what was said, they remembered very vividly the tones and style of the man who had performed. At the annual meeting he gave one of his most grandiloquent speeches. The country folk of Chenley were prepared to be delighted with the great London preacher and of course it elicited much applause. Some of his artifices made them stare with delighted wonder: the marvellous pauses after the sentences did so: so likewise did his fixity of posture. Sometimes when even his voice was at its loudest, he moved not, till you might have fancied him a big roaring statue, dressed in the latest fashion, inflexible in all but the maxilla. . . . At this meeting a question concerning a point of order arose, and Dr. Sound extending his hands over the heads of his hearers, as if pronouncing a benediction, and fixing his eyes heavenwards as if reading a message on high, thus solemnly delivered his oracular judgment. 'The cherubic legions who glitter upon the pearly battlements of the sempiternal profundities, and perambulate the sheening acclivities and declivities of the ambrosial immortalities, are homogenated in firmamental cohesion by one word. It glares through all the centuries, and gleams in perpetual coruscation throughout all our lower mundane sovereignties, from the myriad-chambered ant-hill up to that gorgeous palace where bejewelled Victoria sits serenely on her emblazoned throne—the word *Order*. Our brother is now doing violence to that God-engraven word, and is waging against its laws, anarchic battle. He cannot be further heard.'"

Now, although Dr. Parker saw himself in this, we candidly confess that we read the book and never thought of him. However, on this point he of course must be the best judge. Now whatever faculty Dr. Parker lacks, are we bound, after this, to credit him with the faculty of *self-recognition*? a faculty which even David, a man of no ordinary genius, lacked, for when Nathan held up before his eyes his portrait, instead of recognising himself, he saw only a moral wretch, unworthy of life. In this, we candidly believe, Dr. Parker has been unjust to himself. We had no sooner read Dr.

Parker's abuse of us in the "Fountain," which he himself despatched to us, than we replied to him, assuring him that, so far from painting this portrait, *we knew nothing whatever of the book which contained it until it was actually finished, nor even the intention of any one to produce such a book.* What was the reply we received? An apology? One might naturally have expected it. Instead of that, the following came, which we give *verbatim*:—"North Holme, Highbury Park. June 26. (1.) Dr. P. has not read the letter from Erewyn. (2) He has no time for controversy. (3) His only feeling towards the inspirer of the book has been one of honest love. (4) To be described as "*artificial*," "*mechanical*," "*never speaking from the heart*," and a "*big roaring statue*," is a vulgarity, not to say a falsehood, of the vilest type. Dr. P. has taken part in getting up a testimonial for his oldest ministerial friend, little thinking that he would be described as a hypocrite and an idiot under the suggestion or approval of that friend." In answer to this we caused the following note to be sent:—

"*Erewyn.* Dear Sir,—In a note which you addressed to my father, Dr. Thomas, you referred to the interest you had taken in some testimonial. My father has inquired into the matter, and finds your name down for £3. Without waiting to inquire whether the amount has been paid or not, he desires me to send you at once the enclosed cheque for that amount.

Yours truly,  
A. THOMAS.

We need scarcely say that, although he says he did not read the letter from Erewyn, and "had no time for controversy," he read our cheque, and paid it at once into the bank.

It is with profound regret that we have had to write all this concerning one whom we had served on numerous occasions with some enthusiasm, with signal advantage to himself, and for which we had suffered not a little obliquy and opposition from many of our brethren. We have done so purely in self-vindication, and to put those in possession of the facts of the dispute, who are constantly writing to us on the matter. In all this we assure Dr. Parker we have no unkind feeling towards him, and only profoundly regret that he should have acted in this case, as in others, as his own enemy.

As this book has been by various journals and men in the religious world ascribed to us, we feel bound in justice to ourselves, as well as to the author, to give the entire Preface to the Second Edition:—



I offer my hearty thanks to the Newspapers generally for the greeting with which they have received my first edition. A representative multitude of applauding reviews and criticisms cheers me with the assurance that the best men everywhere are sick of cant.

Of course the cant-mongers have not welcomed my book. They object to it, just as the "long firm," when indicted at the Old Bailey, object to the detective who exposes their manœuvres.

Moreover, cant-mongers love cant to-day better than ever because it pays them better than ever. Whatever I have to say to that Worshipful Guild and Craft will be found in the succeeding pages, and I cannot spare them another line in this preface.

Three publications, and only three, have unwarrantably attacked me; and to these nondescript prints I make answer because of the baseness of their vilifications, and because all the writers have mistaken their mark, whilst the second and third of those to whom I shall refer have unjustifiably struck at a gentleman who has had nothing whatever to do with my book, and is in no way responsible for its contents.

The editor of the *British Quarterly Review*, notwithstanding that the object of my volume is to defend spiritual Christianity against mercenary traders, politely enumerates a set of corrupt motives as my sole reasons for writing it. In his wisdom he evidently mistakes me for somebody else. He thinks I am, like himself, a minister, and am entitled on that account to be treated with the characteristic insolence with which, on the slightest provocation, the grandees of his denomination are in the habit of treating their "dear brethren in the Lord." I laugh as I tell him that in this case his affectation of omniscience has betrayed him into a ludicrous blunder. I will gratify his inquiring mind so far as to inform him that he does not know me, and has never even seen me. It may interest him, too, to learn further that I am not a poor disappointed "brother" of his, nor have I anything whatever to do with his denomination. For the rest, and by way of answer to his suggestion that I am a "disappointed" aspirant for sectarian honours, I will assure him that I look down upon all religion-mongering with utter abhorrence, and I have never fraternised with the sects, or directly or indirectly made a penny, or desired to make a penny, by their methods. My calumniator, speaking editorially of himself, says, "*We* infinitely prefer the cant even of Chadband to that of Mephistopheles." I do the editor of the *British Quarterly* simple justice, when I say that I frankly believe him; for miserable Mephistopheles never practised successful cant, and never once earned anything at the business, whilst unctuous Chadband pursued the trade with the most lucrative results. No unfair strain would have been made on my powers of credulity if my censor, or either of his two companion libellers of my book, had gone further, and had said outright that Chadband, though a misrepresented man, was an altogether admirable character. In cant-mongering circles the sensuous, slobbering, crafty, sleek Chadband has many brethren. Ordinary family pride would suggest that some of them, on grounds of consanguinity, ought to come forward and speak a kind word on his behalf. Having charged me with all kinds of vices, my critic charitably says of me that I am possessed by an "evil spirit," and complementarily concludes by the oracular assertion that I shall fail to do good for the reason that, "devils cannot be cast out by Beelzebub, the prince of devils." This vulgar artifice of his of insulting an opponent whom he has no arguments to answer, is just what I should have expected from that particular "we" of the *British Quarterly* who, with great parade of pedantry, sat down to write a review of my book, and then showed his qualifications for criticism by committing a glaring grammatical error before even finishing the composition of his third sentence. My libeller's plan of imputing base motives, and bracketing his opponent along with the devil, is as old as Billingsgate, where it is said to have originated; and since the trick is quite understood, the silly airs, and the upstart arrogance of this priggish and aforetime mediant review, demand no further notice here. The dictum about Beelzebub has, however, a twofold interest for me. For example, it may furnish a key to explain the sad fact, that some pretentious pulpiteers who are ever abounding in sanctimonious talk, and ever conspicuous in denominational fêtes and crowds, never seem to succeed in improving the moral and spiritual condition of the very people whose "devils" they profess all the time to be casting out. May not vanity itself be a counteracting devil? I commend this

interesting inquiry more particularly to the careful attention of those well paid secretaries of societies who are often busy in arranging for weeks of special prayer in the simulated hope of getting, by the peculiar intervention of heaven, some reasonable proportion of results between the quantity of expensive sermons preached and the number of sinners converted by them.

But the Beelzebub dictum is interesting from another point of view. One of the lucrative denominational penny papers publishes, in anticipation of the May Meetings of 1881, a very pretty little correspondence between Dr. Joseph Parker and Dr. Henry Allon. These reverend doctors seem eager to show that their position as popular preachers does not forbid their openly quarreling with each other in much the same way as ordinary unregenerate persons do, when their personal interests happen to clash. In this conflict Dr. Parker charges Dr. Allon with intending to do him "injury." Dr. Allon tells Dr. Parker, "I am not responsible for either your follies or their effects, and implies that his opponent is "a cantankerous and foolish man." The quarrel appears to have reference to Dr. Parker's desire to be elected chairman of a curious conglomeration called the Congregational Union. Dr. Allon, who writes by the way as though he were the pope of his denomination, thinks, and with some show of reason, that Dr. Parker ought not to be elevated to a post, the eminence of which is so dazzling that even Dr. Allon himself has been able to occupy it. The consequence of this squabble is, that Dr. Parker gives formal notice of his intention to rake up six specified matters in connection with Dr. Allon's past history, one of which concerns Dr. Allon's right to have any connection with a certain "tune book." Dr. Allon, on his part, gives no formal notice of his intention to investigate Dr. Parker's history at a future day, but without further delay enters pell mell upon personalities.

It appears to an impartial reader like myself, that each of these gladiators conceives himself to be in possession of evidence which justifies him in regarding his opponent as being, to say the least of it, very "distant from grace." Far be it from me to be so ungracious as to contradict either of them. I am, therefore, quite willing to admit that the view of each is correct respecting the other. What I do feel, however, is this, that the editor of the *British Quarterly* seems to have expended upon my inoffensive novel all his ex-cathedra objections to the spirit of malice; although I have not attacked anywhere a single human being. And I think that his remarks would have applied better to this present scandal of two professors of Christianity quarreling before the world.

This controversy naturally leads me on to another topic. Dr. Allon asks Dr. Parker, "Why in your communications do you not propose to justify yourself from the much graver matters of public offence, about which I chiefly spake, viz., your disavowal from the pulpit of responsibility for *The Fountain*, your covenanting for sales of *The Fountain* as a condition of preaching for your brethren, the matter of the advertisements,' &c?"

From this remark it would appear, that in the opinion of Dr. Allon and his friends, this *Fountain* newspaper is a concern of such a character as ought to receive "disavowal from the pulpit." Dr. Allon, it appears, includes this print as being one of "the much graver matters of public offence," which have "seriously hindered the confidence of Dr. Parker's brethren." This amuses me mightily; because it was this same *Fountain* which, like the *British Quarterly*, made an attack upon my volume. But it committed an act of injustice, from which the *Quarterly* is exempt. Like a paper which I shall name presently, it ascribed my pages to Dr. David Thomas, the editor of *The Homilist*. It uttered as a proclamation, what the *Christian World* had put forth as an insinuation, that Dr. David Thomas was the author of my volume. This would not have been a heinous offence, but for the fact that the statement was persisted in after it had been certified by the proper authority that it was wholly incorrect. Nor would it be necessary to say more on the subject excepting for the circumstance that Dr. Parker made use of his own blunder as an excuse for a malignant attack upon Dr. David Thomas, of whom he had hitherto, during many years, written in tones of extravagant eulogy. Surely since Dr. Parker knows that Dr. Thomas has had nothing whatever to do with "The World of Cant," we shall sooner or later have, in Dr. Allon's words, a "disavowal from the pulpit, of responsibility for *The*

*Fountain*” so far at least as it relates to the spiteful and outrageous article which it contained upon an innocent man. I must not, however, dismiss this matter without referring to its ludicrous side. It appears that Dr. Parker has assumed that the purely fanciful sketch of one Dr. Sound, in the succeeding pages, is intended as a picture of himself. Under the influence of this wild delusion he insults Dr. Thomas, whom he conceives to have painted his portrait. Vain man! My eyes have not been turned in your direction. Your portrait was never painted at all, and the gentleman whom you have libelled had nothing whatever to do with any portrait that was painted. Can anything be more exquisitely amusing than the sequel to this story? Dr. Parker has copied some portions of my description of the bombastic Dr. Sound, which some of my best critics have considered to be too absurdly unlikeliike, and protests that they describe himself!

The third publication to which I must refer is one which will make a good deal of profit out of the denominational *fracas* between Dr. Allon and Dr. Parker, *The Christian World*. I do not complain of this paper merely for making an onslaught on my book. It is only natural that it should do so; because, in addition to furnishing gossip-fodder for all the “faithful,” and wafting incense before its pet pignies, it has to cater for the Sarah Gamps and Betsy Prigs of the religious kitchen and attic. A wholesome novel must seem a dreadful thing to a reading circle of mawkish and maudlin simpletons who have long been surfeited with drivelling or prurient tales about goody Tommy and goody Molly, and their concomitant snivellers. But, I have a right to characterise as scandalous the impudence of the scribe who tells his readers that they are to disbelieve my prologue, and are in preference to believe his fabrications about it. I also denounce the ambiguous ethics of which the editor showed himself to be a master when he led his readers to believe that Dr. David Thomas was the author of the book, at the very time when he well knew that he was not so. What am I to say of a paper which, when I wrote politely to correct its monstrous errors, suppressed my letter, alluded to it in an insignificant paragraph, and aggravated the editorial offence by substantially reiterating a misstatement which I had proved to the editorial “We?”

The trinity of unrevealed writers in the three publications to which I have referred, snarl very inconsistently because my pages, like theirs, are anonymous. I will tell them the very good reasons why I, who would on no account follow them in anything else, have for once copied their example.

I was about to place my name on the title page of my first edition, when it was suggested to me that I should lose much exquisite fun if I did so. I became convinced, too, of another thing, and that was that if I issued my book merely on its own merits I should have, during its circulation, a better opportunity than otherwise would be obtainable of observing the length and depth to which, when under the unbridled influence of vindictive passions, the monstrous silliness and sanctimonious jugglery of the cant-mongers of England would extend.

One funny thing remains to be recorded. My publishers sent to the publishers of *The Congregational Year Book*, those extracts of literary reviews which are prefixed to this preface, requesting their insertion as advertisements in the usual way and on payment of the usual terms. The publishers of *The Congregational Year Book* replied as follows:—“We cannot accept your bills for *The Congregational Year Book* as their insertion might be distasteful to the proprietors and many of its readers.” Am I to understand that these publishers, proprietors, and readers, consider that they are insulted when cant is attacked? I see no reason why the notices of the public press concerning this book should be “distasteful” to ordinary mortals.

Surely the Congregational body ought to be as pleased to see cant utterly overthrown as other honest men would be. Am I to understand, however, that in the judgment of some of their allied functionaries, there is no real difference between Cant itself and the kind of Christianity proclaimed by “the body;” and that they will regard an attack on either the one or the other as equally “distasteful?”

# The Preacher's Emblematory Helps.

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## SCIENTIFIC FACTS AS ILLUSTRATIONS OF ETERNAL TRUTHS.

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### Fire in Green Wood.    An Emblem of Grace in the Soul.

"HUGO, of St. Victor, makes a threefold division of our faculties. First, and lowest, *cogitatio*. A stage higher stands *meditatio*; by this he means reflection, investigation. Third, and highest, ranges *contemplatio*;] in this state the mind possesses in light the truth which in the preceding it desired, and groped after in twilight.

He compares this spiritual process to the application of fire to green wood. It kindles with difficulty; clouds of smoke arise; a flame is seen at intervals, flashing out here and there; as the fire gains strength, it surrounds, it pierces the fuel; presently it leaps and roars in triumph—

the nature of the wood is being transformed into the nature of fire. Then, the struggle over, the crackling ceases, the smoke is gone, there is left a tranquil, friendly brightness, for the master element has subdued all into itself. "So," says Hugo, "do sin and grace contend; and the smoke of trouble and anguish hangs over the strife. But when grace grows stronger, and the soul's eye clearer, and truth pervades and swallows up the kindling, aspiring nature, then comes holy calm, and love is all in all. Save God in the heart, nothing of self is left."

R. A. VAUGHAN.



## Literary Notices.

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[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books, it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

### THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,  
Since none can compass more than they intend.

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### THE HOMILIST. Simpkin Marshall.

The fifth volume of the "Excelsior" Series is now completed, and the probability is that the present Editor's connection with the work will cease after two more volumes, which will complete *fifty* volumes of the entire work. We state this that those who intend to possess themselves of any of his Homilistic productions may avail themselves at once. The Editor's Enlarged Series, consisting of six volumes, is at present the only series that is *complete*, and this Series the Editors will supply to ministers of limited incomes at the lowest possible price. We would again call the attention of our ministerial readers to the stock of OLD NUMBERS of "THE HOMILIST" which we are anxious to clear out. An advertisement of these appears on the cover. As each Number published at a shilling contains somewhere about fourteen discourses more or less full, and a large variety of other pulpit matter, an opportunity is offered for poor ministers to supply them with pulpit materials which, perhaps, *they may never have again*.

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OUTLINE MISSIONARY SERIES:—MADAGASCAR. By Rev. J. SIBREE, F.R.G.S. CHINA. By Rev. J. T. GRACEY, M.A. INDIAN ZENANA MISSIONS. By Mrs. E. R. PITMAN. London: Snow & Co., Paternoster Row.

These are three of a series of Sixpenny Manuals which Messrs. Snow are issuing to meet a want amongst those who are interested in the progress of Missionary Work in Foreign Lands. They are distinguished by all that ought to mark such manuals, for



they are thoroughly unsectarian in spirit, and far reaching in scope. Moreover, they are by authors well conversant with their subjects, and who have thrown their knowledge into a popular and condensed form that already promises a set of handbooks of no ordinary value. They cannot fail to be of the highest interest to all friends of Christian aggression, whatever may be the standpoint from which they view the great missionary problem.

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MEMORABLE BATTLES IN ENGLISH HISTORY. By DAVENPORT ADAMS.  
IN TWO VOLUMES. VOL I. London: Griffith & Farran, St.  
Paul's Churchyard.

The subject of this work will ever be one of profound interest to Englishmen. This volume contains five chapters, the subjects of which are: The Battle of Hastings, The Battle of Lewes, The Battle of Cressy, The Battle of Agincourt, The Great Battles of the Civil War. The volume reveals vast and varied stores of historic information, a profound research into authorities, great impartiality and independency in its conclusions, much skill in the arrangement and remarkable ability in telling the facts so as to command the interest of the reader from the beginning to the end. Each chapter forms a complete independent narrative. Although the substance of this volume appeared in print some years ago, the author assures us that the present edition has been entirely re-written and greatly enlarged. The only fault we have to find with the author is his tendency to represent wars as glorious and beneficial rather than as infamous and pernicious. For ourselves we regard all wars as the effects, the embodiments, and the instruments of evil, and evil only. Still, as it is the duty of every citizen to acquaint himself with the great wars of his country, he can scarcely have a more enlightened, vigorous and honest historian than this author. We shall await the second volume with interest.

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THE GOSPEL OF THE DIVINE LIFE. A STUDY OF THE FOURTH EVANGELIST. By THOMAS GRIFFITHS, A.M., London: Kegan & Paul, Paternoster Square.

We cannot better introduce this very valuable work to our readers than by quoting an extract from the author's preface: "This volume," he says, "completes my study of the Divine Master, by bringing out those more spiritual teachings of Jesus which have been pre-

served to us mainly in the fourth gospel. In the Translation and Commentary I have aimed, like Ezra's Levites to 'read out the book distinctly, and to give the sense and cause, the understanding of the reading.' But this "giving of the sense" of ancient documents depends on reproducing in the modern mind the same thoughts, with the same associations, which were in the mind of the ancient writer. It demands, therefore, the free, though careful, rendering of his forms of diction and construction into equivalents suited to our present language and age: for in translation, as in everything else, it is the spirit only which can profit: and spirit must create, not borrow, form. In the Appendices, by tracing the gradual development of doctrine in the first page of the Church, I have supplied some help towards settling the place of this gospel in early Christian literature. But my chief endeavour throughout has been to unfold the fundamental principle which distinguishes this gospel, that religion is the life of God in the soul of man. So it was exemplified in Jesus. So it must be realised by His disciples. "As Thou Father art in me and I in Thee, may these be one through having their life in us." May the spirit of the truth use this work to nourish this life of oneness with God." This is a work of matchless excellence on a matchless theme. Those who are acquainted with the other works of the author, such as the "Fatherhood of God," "Sermons for the Times," and the "A B C of Philosophy," will, no doubt, hail with high expectations the announcement of this work. They will expect to find a ripe scholarship, a far-reaching philosophy, a broad Catholicity, a remarkable originality, and a style of unusual clearness and vigour. We heartily recommend the book.

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LEADERS OF MEN. By H. A. PAGE. London: Marshall & Japp, Holborn Viaduct.

"The interest of mankind," says Mr. Matthew Arnold, "is peculiarly attracted by examples of signal goodness in high places: for that testimony to the worth of goodness is the most striking, which is borne by those to whom all the means of pleasure and self-indulgence lay open, by those who had at their command the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." Though it is true that the "interest of mankind is attracted to goodness in those who occupy high places," it is scarcely creditable to mankind that

it should be so. Goodness seems to us to be more glorious and praiseworthy in those who occupy places in the humble circles. Still acting to some extent upon Mr. Arnold's principle our author has produced a most interesting and instructive volume. He gives sketches of Prince Consort, Robert Dick, baker and geologist, Commodore Goodenough, George Moore, John Duncan, weaver and botanist, Samuel Greg, Dr. John Wilson, Dr. Andrew Reed, and Lord Lawrence. We can scarcely say that all the characters sketched here belong to the higher types of Christly excellence, or of moral heroism. A man may be a great student, a great merchant, a great warrior, and yet morally a very small man.

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STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW. By Rev. J. CYND DYLAN JONES. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., Paternoster Row.

We congratulate the author of this volume that his "Studies in the Acts"—an excellent work—has been so welcomed by the public as to encourage him to produce these "Studies in the Gospel of Matthew." The volume contains seventeen discourses on various passages in Matthew. These discourses are models so far as brevity is concerned. No sermon should extend beyond the half-hour, however rich in thought and racy in expression. But if not models in all other respects, they possess merits that justify their publication and will render high service to all who study them.

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MODEL WOMEN. By WILLIAM ANDERSON. London: Snow & Co., Paternoster Row.

As this book has reached its fifth edition, it requires neither characterisation or recommendation. Among the women here sketched we have such names as Susanna Wesley, Eliza Hessel, Elizabeth Fry, Amelia Sieveking, Hannah More, Anne Grant, Anne Stael, Baroness Nairne, Felicia Hemans, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Currer Bell, Caroline Herschel, Jane Taylor, Countess of Huntington, Duchess of Gordon, Mary Jane Graham, Fidelia Fiske. An author must be dull indeed who could not catch such inspiration from these characters as would kindle his imagination and rouse his powers into vigorous action. Hence this book displays a freshness and a force of no ordinary character. Not only are the portraits drawn to life, but the lessons suggested are numerous, wholesome, and ably discussed. We heartily recommend the volume.







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